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ABSTRACT

The nine articles presented in this yearbook were drawn from Arizona State University's Annual Reading Conference which focused on new directions in reading. Four of the articles deal with evaluation techniques in reading and include discussions of developing culture-fair informal reading inventories, what oral language tests really measure, and evaluations of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced measures of reading achievement. The theory and practice related to expressive language skills are discussed in two articles, one dealing with teaching in a bilingual culture, the other with language development through the content areas. The remaining three articles cover the need for readability estimates in the selection of supplementary reading materials, a suggestion that reading researchers look to government and industry for support, and a plea for all educators to humanize instructional practices. (FL)

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VOLUME 1

First Yearbook of the Arizona State University
Reading Conference - 1978

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Copies may be purchased by sending $2.00 to:

Reading Education
Payne B-112
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona 85281

CONTRIBUTORS

Sarah Hudelson
Assistant Professor of Education,
Elementary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Christine Lucas
Professor of Education
McGill University, Montreal, Canada

Berta E. Parrish
Assistant Professor of Education,
Secondary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Ralph Peterson
Assistant Professor of Education,
Elementary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Lyndon Searfoss
Associate Professor of Education,
Elementary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Nicholas J. Silvaroli
Professor and Director of Reading Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Keith Thomas
Assistant Professor of Education,
Secondary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Jeannette Veatch
Professor Emeritus,
Elementary Education
Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

Dennis Wright
Church Educational System
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

FOREWORD

A group of Graduate Students in Reading Education (GSRE) agreed to publish the First Yearbook about Arizona State University's Annual Reading Conference. This 1978 Reading Conference focused on "New Directions in Reading." All aspects of this publication were handled by this hardworking sub-committee. Dr. Jeannette Veatch headed the editorial advisory committee for this First Yearbook. Jann devoted many long hours to insure the literary quality of the nine articles in this first publication.

Of the nine articles included, four deal with evaluation techniques in Reading. Parrish, Searfoss, Silvaroli and Wright provide unique ideas on measurement tools in Reading. Veatch and Hudelson discuss the theory and practice related to expressive language skills. Thomas points out the need for readability estimates when using supplementary reading materials, Lucas suggests that reading research should look to government and industry for support, and Peterson urges all educators to humanize our instructional practices.

No matter what your role in Reading Education, you will find the ideas in this volume useful and interesting.

In closing, I would like to congratulate all those "inner-directed" Graduate Students in Reading Education who possess the leadership to form an organization for graduate students and who expressed their concern for scholarship by volunteering to work on this First Yearbook.

N. J. Silvaroli
Director, Reading Education

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DEVELOPING CULTURE-FAIR INFORMAL READING INVENTORIES

Berta E. Parrish
Arizona State University

Differing types of student populations have prompted questions by many educators on the use of testing instruments. For example, H. Alan Robinson (1966) stated:

> More and more research points to the fact that instruments, which are reliable for the middle-class child may, indeed, be unusable with children from a different culture. (p. 208)

Helen Lloyd (1965), A. Cohen (1969), Carl Rosen (1969), and H. Osman (1960) similarly feel that new types of tests need to be developed to meet this problem. While the controversy over the influence of culture-bias has focused mainly upon standardized tests, the same influence can be seen in the informal reading diagnosis of my students.

Marjorie Johnson (1970) listed four purposes of an informal reading inventory (I.R.I.):

1. to find the correct level for instruction.
2. to determine the highest level at which an individual reads well on his own.
3. to get information on each child's specific assets and liabilities within the total picture of his reading ability.
4. to answer these and related questions: How well does he concentrate? What does he expect to get from his reading? How does he respond to ideas presented by others? How much background of information and experience does he have to bring to the reading? How efficiently does he use this background?

If placement in a basal reader series is the purpose, then the usually constructed informal reading inventory is appropriate. But for an appraisal of the highest level at which a student can read on his own (number 2); for the total reading picture including emotive responses, motivation, and interests

(number 3); and for the answers to behavioral and affective responses (number 4) and his experiential background use, then the commercially purchased or basal-centered informal reading inventories are inappropriate.

In order to obtain the total picture of the learner's reading and thinking ability it is necessary to use his experiences. Whipple (1966) believed that common experiential background is taken for granted by most test constructors, a background that the culturally different child often lacks. Persoske (1968) supported the importance of experiential background on testing when he reported:

> Previous learnings, specifically, inadequacy of experiential background, are probably more important determinants of low performance than the language in which the test was administered.

The inappropriateness of these instruments for the culturally different student within the United States can be generalized to their use outside this country. My personal experiences as visiting professor at Papua, New Guinea brought this to mind as I saw tests developed in Great Britain and Australia, for the British and Australians, being used to diagnose the reading ability of children living in Papua, New Guinea, who have never been to either of these countries. There were no tests, designed for the cultural experiences and background of these rural, non-industrialized people.

This same generalization can and should be applied to other culturally different groups within our own country. For example, Indian children living on a reservation, children living in isolated rural areas such as Appalachia, ethnic groups living in communities with an identity of their own such as Watts or Harlem, all need testing instruments and instructional materials that reflect their experiences, aspirations and interests.

A culture-fair instrument would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to construct. Little success has been achieved in this area. However, if the testing instrument reflects the culture of the reader, then it is culture-fair. This cultural background consists of the direct and indirect (vicarious through legends, family history, etc.) experiences, social customs, religious ceremonies and beliefs, community concerns, and peer group and parental

influences: in summary their emotional and intellectual environment. This cultural background provides a frame of reference for the learner. So, although I designed a test for Mexican-American students (PRIMA) it will be beneficial only with students living in Guadalupe, Arizona. It cannot be used with New Mexican or Texan Chicanos. Nor can the Papua, New Guinea test be used successfully with other Pacific Islanders, as it will have a culture-bias.

Procedure for Developing a Culture-Fair Informal Reading Inventory

1. Passages can be prepared that reflect the culture and community. The teacher and students can write them with information (either orally by taping or in written stories) about the community, its events, its buildings, the people, outstanding characters and animals, celebrations, legends and myths, family life, and anything related to the uniqueness of the environment in which they live. The commonalities of these stories are extracted and rewritten in the form of graded passages by utilizing one or more readability formulas to control difficulty level. In this process, the original language, expressions, and wording of the students need to be retained. This helps make the language of the test even more culture-fair. The Spache Readability Formula for the primary grades, the Lorge for the middle grades, and the Dale-Chall for grades five to nine are appropriate, along with the Fry formula for all of the passages. Each level needs two passages, one for oral reading, one for silent reading.

2. Next, word lists must be constructed for a word analysis (in isolation) score and placement in the passages. Taking 20 words from each of the grade levels, ten from the oral passage and ten from the silent passage, should be sufficient. A graded vocabulary list can be helpful, as well as other informal reading inventory word lists, to get an idea of the type, length, and phonic elements of the words chosen.

3. The comprehension questions are the next task. First, the teacher must decide which comprehension levels he or she wants to test (literal, interpretative, critical, creative). Cunningham (1977) stressed the importance of each teacher adjusting the questions and evaluative criteria of informal reading inventories to match his or her own teaching

practices. The types of questions and the number of each type should reflect the purposes and techniques of each teacher. Truman (1971) stressed the importance of "reading dependent" questions on IRI's. It is especially important on a culture-fair informal reading inventory that literal level questions be dependent on reading the passage. However, the inferential questions will draw on the cultural frame of reference.

4. The evaluative criteria for the functional reading levels now needs to be decided by the teacher. Brittain (1970) stated that the instructional level should not be determined by the rigid application of predetermined statistical criteria. "The wealth of diagnostic information provided by the informal inventory demands flexibility of interpretation." As Betts (1957), Wheeler and Smith (19[illegible] and Nila B. Smith (1959) are in disagreement, the teacher can feel secure in deciding upon her own levels based upon her instructional expectations, the students' capabilities, and the unique characteristics of the environment.

5. Now this pilot study will assure consistency and appropriateness of both the content and the questions. The teacher needs to experiment with some students, using the passages, word list, and questions. Students' opinions and reactions need to be gathered. Modifications can be made based on difficulties of wording or story arrangement, and on suggestions.

Johnson and Kress (1965) have suggested that more teachers should consider making their own informal reading inventories instead of relying upon commercially available ones:

> For greater impact on both diagnosis and instructional work is apt to be felt when construction of inventories, not merely administration of them, is experienced....Careful selection and preparation of materials, followed by tryouts of the inventory and resultant modification, should be real learning experiences.

This is especially related to culture-fair inventories, because the teacher and subsequent testers will gain so much knowledge and insight into the world of their culturally different students.

Both of my inventories were modified after preliminary tryouts on students. This step was very

beneficial and necessary to eliminate any misleading or inaccurate information.

The instrument follows. Repeated use should provide better results than the use of other inventories. I have not felt comfortable with using the IRI, as presented by Ruth Strang, on my culturally different students:

> The informal reading inventory is more valuable as a self appraisal teaching device than as a testing technique. It lends itself to self-diagnosis based on a profile which each student constructs and uses to make an individual plan for self-instruction and practice.

But when the passages describe things within the cultural background of the reader, the inventory experience can stimulate interest, conversation, personal reactions to incidents, and attitudes toward the material. Now I felt comfortable and fair in discussing the student's performance with him, evaluating it, and establishing individual programs and goals. Thus an informal reading inventory called PRIMA was developed.

Research Findings

After developing the PRIMA, a study was designed to investigate the effects of cultural background upon the informal reading inventory diagnosis of ninth grade Anglo and Mexican-American students. The students were randomly selected and randomly assigned a different test administrator for the Goudy Diagnostic Reading Scales and the PRIMA. Ten statistical comparisons using a t-test were made between the results of the Goudy and the PRIMA to determine if significant differences existed between the mean group scores of the functional reading levels obtained.

The findings of this study revealed a significant difference on all five of the functional reading levels--i.e., independent level, instructional word recognition and comprehension levels, and frustration word recognition and comprehension levels--for the Mexican-American students. According to the data presented on Table I, the mean difference scores between the two instruments were greater for comprehension ability than word recognition ability. The students in the reading ability range of 7.0-8.9 revealed a greater mean difference (3.2) on

Table I

MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FUNCTIONAL READING SCORES WITH PRIMA AND GOUDY BY READING ABILITY LEVELS*

MEXICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS

Reading Ability Level	Independent	Instructional Word Recognition	Instructional Comprehension	Frustration Word Recognition	Frustration Comprehension
4.0 - 4.9	+ .2	+1.2	+2.5	+1.2	+2.5
5.0 - 5.9	+ .5	+1.2	+2.5	+1.2	+2.5
6.0 - 6.9	+1.5	+1.2	+2.0	+1.2	+2.0
7.0 - 7.9	+1.5	0	+3.5	0	+3.2
8.0 - 8.9	+1.0	0	+3.5	0	+3.2

ANGLO STUDENTS

Reading Ability Level	Independent	Instructional Word Recognition	Instructional Comprehension	Frustration Word Recognition	Frustration Comprehension
4.0 - 4.9	-1.0	-1.2	-1.2	-1.2	- .5
5.0 - 5.9	-1.5	-1.7	- .2	-1.7	- .2
6.0 - 6.9	-1.5	- .5	- .2	- .5	- .2
7.0 - 7.9	-1.7	- .5	- .2	- .5	- .2
8.0 - 8.9	-2.5	-1.7	- .5	-1.5	0

A + means the PRIMA had the higher score; a - means the Goudy had the higher score.

* Above scores are in grade equivalent form.

comprehension ability than the lower ability students (2.5). Although the students in the lower ranges of 4.0-6.9 also showed greater comprehension difference scores, they revealed a greater mean difference score on word recognition (1.2) than the higher reading ability groups (0).

The opposite is true of the Anglo sample. A greater mean difference score was shown on word recognition ability. The students reading in range of 8.0-8.9 revealed the greater mean difference score on the word recognition levels (1.7 and 1.5). The Anglo students in the reading range of 4.0-4.9 showed the greater mean difference score on the comprehension ability levels (1.2 and .5). The Goudy resulted in a significantly different score for the Anglo on three of the five tested functional reading levels, i.e., independent level, instructional word recognition level, and frustration word recognition levels. There was no significant difference on the tested instructional and frustration comprehension levels.

The findings of this study supported the conclusion that the diagnosed reading ability of disadvantaged Mexican-American students would be significantly higher when the results of an informal reading inventory specifically designed for their cultural and experiential background, the PRIMA, were compared to the results of a widely-used Anglo-oriented informal reading inventory, the Goudy.

Passage and Question Samples

To demonstrate the type of passage content and selected questions, two graded selections--one from PRIMA and one from Informal Reading Inventory for Papua, New Guinea Primary Children--follows.

PRIMA Fifth Reader

Silent: 149 words (5.6 gld)

It was a dark, moonless Halloween night when some teenagers visited Guadalupe Cemetery. When they arrived there, the boys ran quickly over the graves. The girls huddled together and prayed. Suddenly, they all heard a horrible scream. They turned to see where the noise came from. In the shadows of the cemetery, one of the boys stood near a tree, and above that tree

was something white. All the kids dashed to the car. They tried to roll up the windows, but they wouldn't roll up. They tried to turn on the lights, but they wouldn't turn on. Meanwhile, the white thing crept closer. Finally, the car started. They drove out of there as fast as possible. As soon as they were out of the cemetery, the windows rolled up and the lights came on by themselves.

Comprehension Questions

(D) 1. When did they go to the cemetery?
Halloween, at night

(Inf) 2. Why do you think they went to the cemetery?
thrills, kicks, etc.

(Seq) 3. What did the boys do after they got to the cemetery? ran over graves

(Inf) 4. Why are the girls praying? scared

(D) 5. What did they hear? scream

(Def) 6. What does "huddled together" mean? got into a close circle, etc.

(Int) 7. Why do you think they dashed to the car?
saw a ghost, something, white, scared

(MI) 8. What do the kids think they saw? a ghost

(Seq) 9. What happened after they left the cemetery?
lights went on, windows rolled up

Standard Four

The Two Abnormal Boys:

Once upon a time there lived a huge wild pig in the bush of Pomio village. It usually goes out to the village during the storm and kills the people. It was so huge that the people were not able to kill it. The people then decided to leave the island to go to another island.

One old woman was unable to leave the island. The people were so cruel and unkind to her. She lived alone among the rotten logs. She moved out with fear looking for food during the days.

To her surprise, the caterpillars that she was looking after were changed into two little boys. Both boys grew up to be very strong and brave. They could not see many people in the village. They began to ask their foster mother about it. Their foster mother then told them the story of the huge wild pig. The boys then prepared to kill the wild pig with the advice of their foster mother.

While the boys waited with fear in the bush, they saw the huge wild animal coming towards them. Each of them took turns in shooting the fierce animal. Luckily the elder brother shot the animal right in the heart. They then made a huge fire as a sign of victory. All the people then returned to their island and lived happily forever after.

Purpose statement: Read the story above to find out how two boys saved their mother and rescued an island for the villagers.

Questions:

L 1. When does the wild pig come out to the village?

I 2. What would have happened to the people if they had remained in Pomio village?

I 3. Why didn't the people take the old woman with them?

I 4. What would be another suitable title for this story?

Cre 5. What would you do if you were left alone on this island?

V 6. What does the word "abnormal" mean in the story?

Possible Answers:

1. The wild pig comes out to the village during the stormy days.

2. They would have been killed by the wild pig.

3. (I) Because the canoes were full.

   (II) Because she didn't have any relatives to care for.

   (III) Because they thought she was too old to live with them.

4. (I) The miracle on the island.

   (II) An unhappy old woman.

5. (I) I would live in the cave.

   (II) I would make a raft to go after the people.

6. The word abnormal means unusual, not normal, strange.

228 words

Word Recognition

0 - 7 errors = Independent
7 - 22 errors = Instruction
over 23 errors = Frustration level

Comprehension Level

1 error = Indeperdent
2-3 errors = Instructional
over 3 errors = Frustration

Summary

The major premise of this paper is that the natural culture-bias of available and basal-reader informal reading inventories will provide a distorted, limited, and lower diagnosis of the culturally-different student's present and potential reading ability. This misleading diagnostic information will influence the teacher's decisions on remediation methods, materials, objectives, and expectations. All of these disadvantages are eliminated when a teacher uses an informal reading inventory specifically geared to the cultural background of the students in the program.

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ORAL LANGUAGE TESTS: WHAT DO THEY REALLY MEASURE?

Lyndon W. Searfoss
Arizona State University

Oral Language and Learning to Read

Karlin (1975) and others have cited various prerequisites to successful beginning reading instruction. Recently, the importance of oral language has received more attention than any other factor. Dale (1976) views the relationship between learning to read and oral language as reciprocal. He does state, however, that the exact nature of this relationship remains unknown. Groff (1977) is much more emphatic in his review of 50 years of research into the relationship of oral language and reading.

> At present the only authentic conclusion one can offer is that this topic remains one of the most unsettled to be found in reading instruction. (p. 74)

It would seem from a review of the literature that exploration of the relationship of oral language and learning to read is a fruitful area for further research.

Oral Language and the Reading Process

Research into the relationship of oral language and learning to read should proceed with recent psycholinguistic insights in focus. The level of a child's oral language development is viewed as the product of the interaction of culture, experiences, and language. In order for a child to develop oral language as a tool for effective communication, two conditions must exist in the child's culture. First, the child must have a wide variety of experiences. Second, the child must also have an opportunity to interact with others about these experiences. Although the research into the relationship of oral language and later reading achievement is still the subject of debate, as mentioned earlier, the author believes that the level of a child's oral language proficiency is an <u>indicator</u> of his experiences and his opportunities to interact with others about those experiences: a union of experience and language. Adapting the Goodman (1972) model of the reading

process, two key elements of this model of the fluent reader are: 1) background of experiences; and 2) the ability to use language to apply those experiences to reading. Thus the importance of the relationship between experiences and language applies both to the oral language development of a child and to the development of fluent reading behaviors.

Oral Language Assessment

Before further research into oral language can proceed, valid and reliable measures of oral language proficiency must be identified. The instruments presently available are rather diverse in theoretical rationale and format. The assessment of oral language involves the difficult task of structuring a testing situation, usually in school, that will yield valid data about a child's level of language functioning. The data are then usually compared to some standard normative model and judgments are made about a child based on his performance in relation to a normative population. Instructional recommendations are then inferred from an analysis of his performance on such tests.

As with all tests used to assess any variable in children that is largely developed prior to and apart from school, oral language tests have proven to be of dubious value and validity when the testing conditions and tests themselves are closely examined. Specific criticisms of oral language tests are often the same as for other types of tests, e.g., standardized reading tests.

An analysis of current measures of oral language proficiency points to some critical issues in oral language assessment that must be considered as further research into this area is planned.

1. Is it possible to assess children's oral language?

2. Is it possible to assess validly children's oral language in a school setting?

3. Does the background of the examiner influence the results, especially where second language or cultural differences may exist between the examiner and the children?

4. Would an oral language test be reliable?

5. Is teacher observation using a set of specified criteria an acceptable alternative to a standardized test situation?

6. Would a cross comparison of children's performances on several oral language tests yield disparate results, thus fairly or unfairly placing larger or smaller numbers of these children in special programs, depending on the oral language test used?

It is the last issue that is the subject of current research by the author and others. The results of a pilot study that compares four leading measures of oral language is presented below.*

A Comparison of Four Oral Language Tests

The first purpose of the pilot study was to compare the scores of children on four tests of oral language proficiency. A second purpose was to determine if, on the basis of the pilot study, a major study was warranted.

Four leading measures of oral language were selected for use in the pilot study. If all four tests classify an individual child as proficient in oral language, then it can be assumed the child is proficient. A next step would then be to determine which test can be the most efficiently used in schools. If, however, the tests do not consistently assess the oral language proficiency of individual children, much doubt can be cast on their validity. A next step in that case would be the development of a valid instrument to assess oral language.

Sample

The sample for the study was made up of thirty students, stratified into three groups--kindergarten, first, and second grades. Ten children were randomly selected from each grade.

* The author gratefully acknowledges Dr. Jann Skinner for providing the subjects for the pilot study as well as the personnel to collect the data. The assistance of Tamra Keller is also acknowledged in all phases of the pilot study. Her dedication to the project provided a link of continuity from beginning to end.

The school from which the sample was taken was one in a migrant community in Fresno, California. The children were those of migrant farm workers and were predominantly Spanish surnamed. The particular school was chosen because of the variety of English language abilities within the home environments. These abilities ranged from no English spoken in the home to fluency in English within the home. This decision allowed for a variety of abilities, evident in test results, necessary for comparisons when testing for either oral English language proficiency or non-proficiency.

The sample was chosen from Spanish-speaking children over those of any other foreign language in the United States because two of the oral language tests have both Spanish and English texts.

Instruments

The tests used in this study were the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT); the Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM); the Oral Language Evaluation (OLE); and, the Monroe Scale for Evaluating Child's Language Ability (Monroe).

Data Collection

All four oral language tests were administered to each student over a period of one week. Trained examiners and a randomized test order were used to control experimental error. Test results were then compiled and scores reduced so that percentages of consistency among the test scores for each student could be computed.

Data Analysis

The data were compiled and categorized as "proficient" or "non-proficient" in determining the individual's scores on the four language assessments. Percentages were drawn on the individual's scores to show the consistency of the test scores for any given individual. 1.00 was used as a total for proficiency or non-proficiency on all four tests, .75 for agreement among three of the four tests, and .50 for agreement of two of the four tests.

Findings

Table I shows the comparisons of each child's score on all four tests; it is sub-divided by grade levels to show the average consistency of the scores for each grade level. The breakdown of percentages is as follows:

100% equals consistently all proficient or all non-proficient;

75% equals three test scores consistent with each other; and

50% equals two of four scores as consistent.

The average consistency of test scores was: Kindergarten--80%; first grade--80%; and second grade --78%. The overall average of the consistency in test results was 79%.

Conclusions and Recommendations

A research pilot study was undertaken to compare the scores of four oral language assessments of children's oral language proficiency or non-proficiency in oral English. Percentages of consistency, or conformity, show that the scores are consistent with one another eighty percent (80%) of the time for kindergarten and first graders and seventy-eight percent (78%) of the time for second graders. While relatively high, these percentages leave room for casting some doubt on the content validity of the oral language assessments used in the study.

Looking at the inconsistencies one finds the Bilingual Syntax Measure to be the most inconsistent when compared to the other tests. However, the sample size is definitely too small to suggest that the BSM is indeed an inadequate assessment of language development.

The following recommendations for further research are made based on the results of the pilot study:

1. A study using the same instruments with a larger sample size seems warranted.

2. Data should be analyzed not only for consistencies among test scores within a grade level but across grade levels. Such an

Table I

COMPARISONS IN CONSISTENCIES OF ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT TEST RESULTS

Kindergarten	Oral Language Tests				Percentage of Consistency
	PPVT	BSM	Monroe	OLE'	
1	P	NP	NP	P	50
2	P	P	P	P	100
3	NP	NP	NP	NP	100
4	NP	P	NP	NP	75
5	P	P	P	NP	75
6	P	NP	P	P	75
7	P	P	NP	NP	50
8	P	P	P	P	100
9	NP	P	P	P	75
10	NP	NP	NP	NP	100
Average Percent of Consistency = 80					

First Grade	Oral Language Tests				Percentage of Consistency
	PPVT	BSM	Monroe	OLE'	
1	P	P	NP	P	75
2	P	P	P	P	100
3	P	P	P	P	100
4	P	P	NP	NP	50
5	NP	NP	NP	NP	100
6	P	P	NP	P	75
7	P	P	NP	NP	50
8	NP	P	P	P	75
9	P	P	P	NP	75
10	P	P	P	P	100
Average Percent of Consistency = 80					

Second Grade	Oral Language Tests				Percentage of Consistency
	PPVT	BSM	Monroe	OLE'	
1	P	NP	P	P	75
2	NP	NP	P	P	50
3	NP	NP	NP	NP	100
4	P	P	P	P	100
5	NP	NP	P	P	50
6	P	P	P	P	100
7	P	P	P	P	100
8	P	NP	P	NP	50
9	P	NP	P	P	75
10	P	P	P	NP	75
Average Percent of Consistency = 78					

P = Proficiency in the English language
NP = Non-proficiency in the English language

analysis would detect whether there seems to be a growth curve in test scores as children proceed through the grades. If the tests used are indeed sensitive to changes in oral language development these changes should be reflected in the test scores.

Summary

Although research has not definitely established a relationship between oral language development and success in learning to read, the author believes a strong reciprocal relationship exists among the factors common to both oral language development and fluent reading behaviors. These common factors are culture, experience, and language which operate in a dynamic interaction. One avenue of research is to explore the relationship among these three factors through the examination of assessment measures which purport to measure oral language proficiency. Where such research will lead is open to much speculation. However, both researchers and those practitioners who attempt to apply the results of research to classroom practice must continually keep in mind that the goal of all our efforts is to aid children in becoming effective in communicating through speech and print.

The current interest, both educational and financial, in oral language development is to be welcomed but also viewed with some alarm. It would appear that oral language programs are at the same stage of development today as reading programs were 25 to 30 years ago. Historically, reading became after that time a subject area, as if it had the valid content of a subject such as science. The plethora of materials and money poured into reading was done as if the scope and sequence of reading skills proposed by reading educators were the body of facts a student needed to master in order to read. The fact that research has even to this day failed to show the validity of this commonly accepted premise is still ignored as more and more materials and programs appear almost daily. The result today is that the emphasis on producing children who can read has far overshadowed the primary goal of reading instruction, producing children who do read and use reading as a powerful communication tool.

Educators and publishers interested in oral language development programs now emerging in our school are about to embark on the same journey as reading educators have done, making oral language a subject. The author sincerely hopes such a mistake is not made.

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EVALUATION: NORM REFERENCED TESTS*

Nicholas J. Silvaroli
Arizona State University

Standard school practice utilizes Norm Referenced Tests to measure a student's reading ability. This kind of measurement can be identified as classification testing. The results tend to classify the student according to some global reading achievement level which is frequently interpreted as the student's instructional reading level.

Global reading achievement scores on Norm Referenced Tests are used to classify students of comparable ages or grade groups according to above average, average, and below average reading ability. However, results from these kinds of tests do not provide classroom teachers with the information necessary to establish an independent and instructional reading program for the student. Therefore, if the classroom teacher does not have information regarding the student's specific reading needs, it becomes impossible to determine the types of instructional programs best suited for each student.

Therefore, let me introduce my main point: Norm Referenced Tests only classify students and compare groups--they do not diagnose.

Norm Referenced Tests may be in the form of a total battery of tests which deal with math, social studies, science, language arts, etc. On the other hand, Norm Referenced Tests may deal only with reading achievement, per se. In any case, Norm Referenced Tests attempt to measure reading achievement in two primary areas. One area is word recognition. The other area is comprehension.

Many of these Norm Referenced Tests include subsections dealing with visual discrimination, different kinds of letter recognition, etc. These subsections, however, come under the word recognition category. There are also subsections labeled vocabulary, but vocabulary usually comes under the comprehension category.

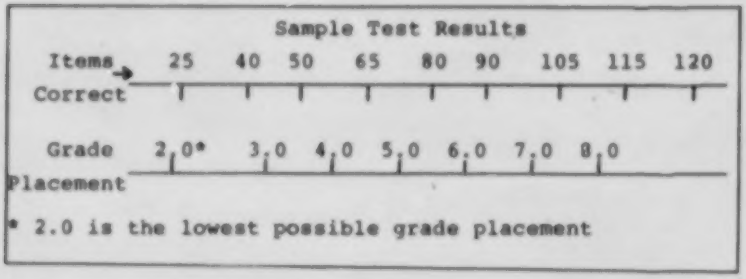
* Adapted from Teaching Reading: A Decision Making Process. N. Silvaroli & W. Wheelock, Kendall Hunt Publishing Co., Dubuque, Iowa, 1975, (paperback)61-66.

Norm Referenced Tests are administered in approximately 95% of American schools. One problem here is the misunderstanding of the function and purpose of these tests. Basically, Norm Referenced Tests are designed to compare groups. Unfortunately, teachers, administrators, and parents use them in individual comparisons as well.

Imagine, if you will, all the fifth grade classes in your school district. School X's fifth grade reading achievement can be compared to school Y's fifth grade reading achievement by use of one of the many Norm Referenced Tests. From this we can determine if a particular fifth grade class is at, above, or below the norm established for fifth grade students. But such a procedure cannot help us to determine an individual student's competence.

As a hypothetical example, let us invent a youngster we shall call Ira. Ira is a fifth grade student who is a nonreader. Today, Ira is going to take a group reading achievement test designed for grades fourth, fifth, and sixth. We might take special precautions so that Ira won't accidentally do well on the test. Even though we are sure that he is a nonreader, we will blindfold him. Then we will guide Ira so that he can make random marks on the test answer sheet. What would you predict Ira's reading achievement score to be once we have graded his answer sheet? Did you predict that Ira's score would be zero? After all, he is a nonreader. We also know that he is blindfolded and marking his answer sheet at random. But wait a minute! Would Ira's score be zero?

Following is a sample scoring profile for a Norm Referenced Test designed for fourth- fifth- and sixth-grade students.


Sample Test Results
Items Correct
25 40 50 65 80 90 105 115 120
Grade Placement
2.0* 3.0 4.0 5.0 6.0 7.0 8.0
* 2.0 is the lowest possible grade placement

By inspection, we can see that Ira would be assigned a reading achievement score of 2.0. That is, we can take this to mean that Ira is reading as well as the students in the sample population who had a score of 2.0--students reading two years, no months, in terms of reading achievement. Simply stated, Ira is supposedly doing as well as a second grader even though we know him to be a nonreader. The reason Ira has a grade equivalency score of 2.0 is that this particular test does not go any lower. Ira's grade equivalency score of 2.0 represents the floor, or base, of this test.

The example of a student taking a test blindfolded is an absurd one used to dramatize my point. However, let me further assume that Ira, a nonreader, is taking the test without being blindfolded. Allow me to also assume that Ira as a fifth grade student has had some previous experience in taking Norm Referenced Tests, reading or other kinds. This particular test has 120 test items. Statistically, Ira is bound to make some correct responses in taking this test. If he scores 45 items as correct out of the total 120 items, this would now give him a grade equivalency score of 2.9. That is, he starts with a grade equivalency score of 2.0 for the floor, or base; and if you add the 45 correct responses for guessing to this floor of 2.0, you now arrive at a total grade equivalency score of 2.9. This means that Ira is reading as well as the sample population of two years, nine months--or almost as well as a third grader.

Keep in mind that Ira is a nonreader. The conscientious teacher then looks at Ira's grade equivalency score of 2.9, and says to the librarian: "Give me a few books with a low third grade or upper second grade readability level because Ira has difficulty reading."

The teacher presents these books to Ira. Ira looks at these books and exclaims, "I can't read them!" At this point, our conscientious teacher throws up his or her hands in dismay and wonders, "What in the world am I going to do now? Ira can't even measure up to what he did on the test!"

This is an obvious problem and teachers must be sensitive to the floors built into Norm Referenced Tests.

What is more frustrating, Ira will show a major gain in reading despite the fact that he may not have had any additional reading assistance. This will

occur when Ira gets to seventh grade. At this point he will show a massive leap ahead in reading achievement because at this level the floor of the test has been raised to 4.0. So Ira will show a gain in reading achievement not because his reading skills have improved, but because the group reading achievement test has bumped him along. Again, if we add some correct responses for guessing, Ira, by the time he is in junior high, will show a grade equivalency score to indicate that he is doing as well as a fifth grader. And Ira may still be a nonreader! Consequently, it is very important that teachers be aware of the meaning and limitations of group reading achievement test scores.

Whereas Ira, a nonreader, was scored as a low level reader, the reverse situation can also occur. For example, consider the possible results of a test which has a ceiling, or a top. On this test, a student has to have 120 correct responses out of a possible 120 to achieve a grade equivalency score of 8.0. If he misses a mere 15 items (he only has about 35 minutes to complete the test), his grade equivalency score will plummet to 6.0.

The point in this discussion is that Norm Referenced Tests, at best, classify. They classify a student as high, average, or low. Beyond classification, group reading achievement tests cannot give the teacher any information regarding the achievement level of a particular, individual student. The group reading achievement test cannot tell the teacher whether Ira's grade equivalency score of 2.9 indicates that he could independently read "hard" second grade material, that he needs instruction at the second grade level or that he is frustrated with second grade material.

There are other misconceptions regarding group reading achievement tests. For example, Betty comes to school in September. Betty has a grade equivalency score of 5.4 in reading achievement. By the end of the school year in May, Betty has a grade equivalency of 5.7. Betty's teacher may be inclined to think, "Well, it isn't much, but at least she has gained three months!" This gain, however slight, may satisfy the teacher and give her something positive to report to Betty's parents.

Now, let's have Betty come at this in another way. She comes to school in September. She has a grade equivalency score of 5.7 in reading achievement. By the end of the school year in May, Betty has a

grade equivalency of 5.4. Did she lose three months? No! All that the difference of three months indicates, whether plus or minus, is what is called the error of measurement. Differences so slight, as in Betty's case, are the result of chance and are nonsignificant.

The problem that teachers face is that quite often they are at a loss to explain how Betty could lose three months after putting in a year of work. Unless the student has shown a difference, plus or minus, of six months, the teacher should not be concerned about interpreting the score. To insure that Betty did, in fact, make some growth on the Norm Referenced Test, the teacher should look for a change of six months or more in her grade equivalency score. And then only after she has checked to see that this gain is not accounted for by the fact that the floor, or base, of the test had come up.

Another problem with group reading achievement tests is the question of whether or not they are diagnostic.

Following is a group reading achievement test with a series of items purporting to be diagnostic.

Sample: Analysis of Reading Achievement

Decoding

1. Letter Forms

   1-20 Lower case letters (faces)
   21-30 Upper case letters (faces)
   31-40 Various type faces

2. Phonics

   1-15 Consonants
   16-25 Vowels

3. Etc.

The youngster is required to look at each item and then decide whether the two words presented are the same or different. He is instructed to mark an S for same, and a D for different. If he scores correctly on items 1 through 20, we assume that he knows the lower case letter forms of the alphabet. If the student scores correctly on items 21 through 30, we assume that he knows the upper case letter

forms of the alphabet. Finally, if the student scores correctly on items 20 through 25, we assume that he knows various type faces. But do we really know this?

The student has four minutes to respond to those items. If the student is a slow worker and completes only the first twenty items, assume he scored them correctly, does that mean that he doesn't know his upper case letters--items 21 through 30? Or does it mean that time ran out on him?

It is fortunate, however, that very few teachers ever use group reading achievement tests in an attempt to describe what would be called a diagnostic interpretation of a student's reading. The only thing that group reading achievement tests can do is compare groups and classify students as either high, average, or low in respect to their reading achievement. Beyond that--comparison and classification--it is virtually impossible for group reading achievement tests to do anything else.

When the time comes for teachers to report students' progress to parents, extreme caution should be taken when discussing grade equivalency scores. I've had situations where parents have come to a parent-teacher conference and said, "Last year, Scott had 4.3 on his reading test. What did he get this year?" The parents actually record these grade equivalency scores and refer to them from year to year.

In closing, teachers and administrators are urged to observe extreme caution when using grade equivalency scores. It is recommended that teachers and administrators talk to parents in terms of above average, slightly above average, outstanding reading achievement--words such as this rather than the actual score (number).

Student scores (numbers) should be limited to group comparisons for general research or district level accountability purposes. Attempts to evaluate individual student reading achievement or worse, to evaluate individual teacher effectiveness with Norm Referenced Tests results is, in my view, an extremely poor professional practice.

CRITERION-REFERENCED MEASURES OF READING ACHIEVEMENT

Dennis A. Wright
Director, Church Educational System
Vancouver, British Columbia

In spite of the wide acceptance of the criterion-referenced evaluation method, there are serious limitations when the method is applied in reading education (Johnson & Pearson, 1975). These limitations result from the failure of criterion-referenced tests in reading to satisfy certain of the basic assumptions of criterion-referenced measurement. Glaser (1963) defined one important assumption of criterion-referenced measurement as the acceptance of a definite hierarchy of skill behaviors. This assumption has not been fully satisfied, as reading authorities have yet to define empirically an acceptable hierarchy of reading skill behaviors (Thompson & Oziuban, 1973).

A second basic assumption required by criterion-referenced measurement is related to the manner in which the test items are selected. Popham and Husek (1969) explained that valid criterion-referenced test items must be drawn at random from a defined universe of all such behaviors related to the end objective. Since there is little apparent agreement as to what constitutes the universe of reading behaviors (Wardhaugh, 1973), then it follows that samples drawn from any existing lists are subjective item selections at best (Ransom, 1972).

It is no wonder that Johnson and Pearson (1975) reported that criterion-referenced reading tests had not been as useful as was hoped. Many tests in current use have not provided the research background necessary to demonstrate that the above limitations have been overcome. Until such evidence is forthcoming, Popham (1974) would consider such tests "cloud-referenced tests," as they are unable to provide precision in measurement.

Recent research in reading education reinforces the doubts cast on criterion-referenced reading tests. McNeil (1974) provided evidence supporting the contention that criterion-referenced reading tests are less effective than often assumed. He reported a study dealing with 150 students ages 7-9. Student performance on selected criterion-referenced word

recognition measures was considered to be related to performance in an oral reading task. McNeil found that many of the criterion-referenced word recognition measures were not in fact related to successful oral reading. He therefore concluded that these measures were not useful in a meaningful reading evaluation program.

A similar study was reported by Wright (1978). Performances of 119 third graders on selected criterion-referenced word recognition measures were paired with performances on a grade level cloze task. The cloze task was selected because of its wide acceptance as a valid, objective index of reading achievement (Taylor, 1957; Bormuth, 1967; 1969; & Carver, 1974). Data analysis was designed to describe possible relationships between achievement in criterion-referenced measures and achievement in the cloze task. Three areas of word recognition were defined by the criterion-referenced instrument: structural analysis, visual phonics, and auditory phonics. Each of the three word recognition variables was found unsuitable as a predictor of successful reading achievement. Wright concluded that these criterion-referenced measures provide little useful information in determining progress toward successful reading.

The above discussion has presented examples from recent research to support the contention that criterion-referenced reading tests are somewhat limited and should be used with caution. However, in spite of these and other warnings (Prescott, 1971; Dziuban & Vickery, 1973; Johnson & Pearson, 1975), the blind acceptance of the criterion-referenced approach to reading evaluation continues to grow. The limitations of the technique are seemingly ignored as educators redesign reading programs to satisfy the criterion-referenced model.

Given the understanding that the reading process is quite complex and does not readily lend itself to criterion-referenced measurement, the teacher is left to interpret the criterion-referenced scores imposed by the school community. It is at this point that the reading teacher must assume an active role in determining the nature of the classroom reading program. In doing so the teacher must be responsible for decisions made based on the criterion-referenced measures. This responsibility requires that the teacher be fully aware of the limitations of the method and balance criterion-referenced evaluations with other available measures of reading achievement. In this manner the instructional decisions required of the reading teacher will be both sound and professional.

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READING AND FA'A SAMOA: TEACHING IN A BI-LINGUAL CULTURE

Jeanette Veatch
Professor Emerita
Arizona State University

As a Title III professor emerita at the American Samoa Community College at Pago Pago last spring I was asked to improve the teaching of English to native Samoans. The thrust in the island towards a bi-lingual society is probably irreversible as use of English in school and in daily life has been sufficient to set this in motion. A Samoan, however, rarely speaks English outside of the classroom, where he has been taught in English from first grade up. But that is another story. Not surprisingly, the greatest motivation towards bi-lingualism is the strong desire to come to the USA mainland or get a bi-lingual job on the island.

Through a set of circumstances too long to go into at this time, we began a testing program for incoming students at the college level for summer session 1977. We found only 38% of them, on Stanford and CELT, had an English competency on or above the sixth grade level. Approximately 30% were below the 3.5 level and the rest were in between.

At the beginning of the semester in January a program called English Language Institute (E.L.I.) was added to the usual traditional "bonehead" English courses. Both E.L.I. and the English classes were typically and totally based upon textbook lessons, xeroxed, teacher-made exercises, and grammar drill. There was no element of language experience, no original writing of any kind, nor any free reading of library books. In fact, the drop-out rate of 30% to 40% says it all. Those who did not drop out were bitterly disappointed as revealed in an evaluation by the students. This writer was a visiting fireman so to speak, thus was asked to help improve these offerings. She had little success in spite of the support of the Director. In short, the situation, insofar as learning the English language was concerned, was so dismal that the head of the English Department, separate from the E.L.I. program, admitted that nothing was working and so was willing to try anything new and different. The President of the College set up a task force, chaired by this writer, to make

specific suggestions for an improved curriculum. The result was a set of recommendations based upon the use of library reading, creative writing, and spontaneous oral activities. The report specifically recommended the elimination of all text book materials and printed workbook drills based upon grammar and usage. In short, as you will recognize, the recommendations were in line with what is known to be psycholinguistic practice. Yet the term psycholinguistics, as well as the term individualized reading, and the language experience approach were unknown and unused on the island.

It is in this connection that the term "fa'a Samoa" comes into focus. It can be variously translated, although its direct meaning is "the Samoan way." "The Samoan way" can be a pejorative, analogous to "manana," meaning inefficient, lazy, non-operative. But it can also denote the positive elements of pride in culture, in tradition, in self, in the aiga (i.e., the family), and in love of ancient ways, including language.

The reason this phrase is included in the title is because it became the basis of all our teaching. We used the love of family, the pride in the aiga, the respect of self as a Samoan to promote the development of the English language in these students. If the term language experience means anything, it means "fa'a Samoa." For that is what we did.

Forty-two young adults with an English reading competency level of fourth to fifth grade enrolled in a six weeks summer session. The writer was alone for the first week with minimal help from a native Samoan (to help translate ideas, not language). The second week three contract teachers joined the staff as trainees. They continued after the writer left at the end of the fourth week. Thus the class was a staff training project as well as, for the American Samoa Community College, an experimental activity in teaching English to native Samoan speakers.

The results were spectacular. After six weeks, the last two of which, you remember, were conducted without the presence of the writer, the mean gain of the students was six months. That is, a month a week. The drop out rate was 7%, or three out of the forty-two, and the attendance was at acceptable levels. While morale cannot easily be measured it is interesting to note that the demands for fall term enrollment in "that reading and writing class" surprised advisors.

In addition, during the summer, the pressure for enrollment was so great that a second class in the afternoon was set up the second week along the same lines and taught by one of the three staff being trained in the morning. Even though this class met only five weeks, the testing revealed their gains only slightly less than the full six week morning class.

Earlier when the task force was discussed, the faculty of the college agreed, unanimously (to show how bad the situation was as far as English competency was concerned), to accept the enrollment of any student testing above the 6.2 level on Stanford and CELT. When individual scores of our class were examined, it was found that over half, that is 51%, had lifted themselves above the magic 6.2 figure. Among that group at least four had gained dramatically a year or more in the six weeks session. Although on the other hand, a full one quarter of the students showed little or no gain. The statistician wondered if the activities used were more suitable for the more able as their gains were so sharp. This writer tends to believe that those at the less able level simply eed more time. Surely we were doing something right.

The class met from nine to twelve, each morning. A few students had been in the traditional English classes, and two women had immigrated from Korea the previous year.

In general the teaching was directed in three different modes: 1) individualized reading using six hundred paperback books, 2) the use of oral English in some fashion, and 3) writing originally, spontaneously and creatively, as well as practically. All text books were eliminated. Grammar, as such, divorced from actual writing, was avoided. Drills on printed exercises were assigned rarely, and then only on individual basis. At no time during the six weeks were words like "subjects," "predicates," "prepositions," "nouns and verbs" mentioned. Knowledge of such parts of speech are not helpful to promote communication and were avoided. The remainder of this paper will describe the various activities carried on.

Writing Activities

Perhaps the most successful of all activities was that of creative writing. It was surely the most important as it was central to the development of

language. The writing was the juice, the power, the electricity that drove the wheels of learning for each member of the class. In order to have it as a major part of the class, a set of procedures were followed. These were designed to convince each student that his head was full of ideas, and that the ideas were worthy of writing. The writing activity was structured as to its process, but not as to its content.

The first writing session was different from those that followed. The teacher made sure everyone had a good pen or pencil to write with. Then the class was casually asked "to write something." Not surprisingly, these writings were short, mundane and uninteresting in the extreme. "Draw a line now." the teacher continued. "When I say a word, I want you to write the first thing that pops into your mind very fast. Write without stopping until your hand hurts. Write whatever comes into your mind. Don't stop until I tell you to. I will give you three minutes. Ready? "GREEN!" (Any word, such as "HOUSE" or "AIR" might have been used.)

In this way the students were put in a pressurized writing situation where they were urged to write anything fast and furiously. After three minutes they were stopped and asked to read back silently what they wrote. Next they were asked to underline only those words that referred to "green." In all cases the students had written many other things, not in the slightest related to "green." This the teacher picked up on:

> See how much you had in your mind compared to what you wrote first. Perhaps there was something you started that you would like to finish. Maybe there was an idea you had that you didn't have time to write about. I will let you write now for as long as you wish about those ideas you liked but didn't get a chance to put down.

Thus the students were set on their way as far as writing was concerned. Pressurized writing was not used again. Only encouragement, suggestions, and support were necessary. These Samoans loved to write. As the days went by, the teacher made generalized suggestions designed to trigger recollections, experiences, emotions and memories. It worked. Not a day went by but this kind of free and spontaneous writing occurred. They wrote pages, to the astonishment and pleasure of the faculty. Once in a while one student would not have an idea, but more often each had

clearly been thinking about what might be written and would even ask "Are we going to write about our memories today?"

Mechanics were handled in various ways. Usually in one-to-one conferences on a piece of writing chosen by the student every sixth day. The recognition of the role of periods to express thought units produced an interesting lesson to the staff. The teacher read from a story and asked the class to click their tongues when they heard her voice drop at the end of the sentence. Then, as a whole class, she asked that they read their own writings and see where the "clicks," i.e., the periods, belonged on their own paper. Note that this was an activity in which the whole class was able to work on their individual writing.

Students were asked, but not required, to let the staff read their writing each day. Often a casual perusal WITHOUT GRADING OR CORRECTION, would reveal that several of the group needed teaching on some specific item, usually having to do with tense or number. These students were asked to meet with a teacher who gave a brief lesson to correct the errors. In this way teachers did not need to spend time on actual corrections of papers, but still were able to spot the problem among the students who actually had THAT problem and help them recognize their mistakes for future reference.

Along with these whole class and small group sessions, students were asked individually to choose one piece of writing from the preceding five days and bring it to one of the staff to read aloud and learn how to make it better. One significant occurrence in these individual conferences was that most of the students were able to correct many of their errors when they HEARD themselves reading their own writing. If there were some things that were missed the teacher would explain and demonstrate, even ask the student to do a drill on whatever it was that was needed.

Thus the writing mechanics were covered in three types of sessions, whole class, group, and individual. The reward that proved very desirable to most was, when they had corrected their writing, to have it typed. Work-study typists in the office would copy the story for posting on the wall. The desire to have their writing typed was considerable and many individuals labored hard to make their handwriting legible for the typists.

Other writing activities were developed. A huge and greatly admired wall newspaper took a whole wall and a whole morning to complete, but the results were worth it. The students were pleased to see their efforts posted on the wall.

Writing on acetate for the overhead projector worked well also. Darkening the room and reading silently and aloud what was written--jokes, "tupuas" (riddles), sayings, what have you--was enjoyable. Suggestions as to improvement or correction were not resented, and many an error was spotted.

Letter writing appealed to some, and promises of stamps got others going. A longer time might have allowed for setting up a Pen Pal project to friends across the ocean.

The class was asked daily to fill out an evaluation form in which they listed what they had done, something they had thought about, and how they felt about the day's events. These were thoroughly perused by the staff and returned with written comments (NOT corrections) each morning. They seemed to enjoy getting these evaluations back, reading them with absorption and filing them in their folders. Here is one example:

> While I was walking along the way to the forest, I heard the birds sweetly singing in the shade trees. I was very happy for my hunting because that day was a shiney day. When I arrived under the big tree, I had a little rest.

Later on a far more accurately written piece came to us:

> As I strolled on the beach one day, I imagined the sea water has been swallowed up from nowhere. In that time I think I was walking into the empty space and sea creatures were dying.
>
> Although I was very afraid I became curious of what stands beyond. While I was walking along the beach, I saw the cruel unkind waves crushing at me. Suddenly a roaring sound interrupts my dreams. I ran and ran faster, but I can't make it, not very long (after) I feel free like a bird in the sky. I was on an unknown planet so dark and cold.

While this is indeed awkward to the native English speaker it is a fine example of how ideas provide the

driving force for writing. The absorption of the class in their daily writing was unprecendented, and occasioned many visitors to come and see for themselves. We worked away at the main problems which were tense and number. These seemed to be insoluble, even for clerks in the bank who had to be bi-lingual to hold a job. My final bank statement from Pago Pago included this message:

> On your saving account the balance was xxxx dollars....we lessed our charge xxxx dollars. Hopefully, you enjoy our services.....

They loved to write and wrote copiously. It was rewarding to us all.

Oral English Activities

The second major activity was centered around many ideas that required the use of spoken English. As there were three native English speaking staff, the palagis, we took turns reading a story in English to the whole class. There was a problem in finding materials that were adult enough and yet not so obtuse as to be unintelligible to the listeners. I thought the "Telltale Heart" by Edgar Allen Poe would be a dandy, but it was too difficult to understand and I had to do a simplification of the language as I read aloud. Over and over we tried to find suitable stories, but with very little luck. It seemed to me then, and now, that this is a great void for those who teach bi-lingual students.

Along with this oral reading by palagis of stories in English, we xeroxed simple plays in sufficient quantities so that the class could be divided up in casts and the plays read in turn. This was whoopingly successful and much in demand. In each case the palagi staff would close the activity by reading the play aloud as the students would follow along in their copies.

Another activity was improvisation. One staff typed up short situations and asked for volunteers. For example: "Your boss has just caught you asleep on your job." or "The wife has been playing bingo all afternoon. She has not had time to make the supper. The husband comes home hungry."

These were acted out by successive casts. Comments were made as to the different ways certain

phrases might be said. As we stated earlier these Samoans rarely spoke English outside of class; thus, to volunteer to act out such a situation indicated they were willing to expose their English weaknesses. The staff felt that this might have been the most productive activity for spontaneous English, as we noticed a marked increase of the use of that language during class hours.

Spelling proved to be of little concern, perhaps because the Samoan language is so phonetic and alphabetic (i.e., many letter names can be heard as a word is pronounced) and no letters are silent.

But the main problem for the entire student body was their confusion on tense and number, as demonstrated above in the note from the bank clerk. To get at this we conducted a whole class activity in which the teacher performed certain actions and the students wrote down what they saw. This is a familiar strategy to teachers of bi-lingual students.

The class was asked to write down what they saw the teacher doing. For example, the teacher would drop a book on the floor. The student would write "Jeannette dropped a book on the floor," or "The book was dropped on the floor," or "The book fell to the floor from Jeannette's hands." Anything that was in correct English was allowed. Another action might be ongoing such as jumping up and down. The student was to write "Jeannette is jumping up and down." This form proved to be the hardest English of all for them.

This activity was carried out frequently and entailed about ten actions. It must be emphasized that papers were NEVER graded. On the contrary they were usually asked to swap papers with a partner and see if they agreed on what they wrote. Or sometimes they chose partners and one would do the writing. That meant that they would have to talk it over to see if they agreed on what to write. All of this was using English and testing out without fear of punishment--beyond their own shame, which was sometimes considerable, even if private--or embarrassment. We all felt that these sessions were fun and highly instructive.

Vena, our one Samoan staff member, although fluently bi-lingual, was a gifted teacher as well as a ham at heart. One of his most popular and effective activities was beginning a story and then asking various class members to continue it to some logical, or illogical, conclusion. He was able, more than the

rest of us, to break through the cultural shyness of the Samoan personality.

The morale of the situation was high and often produced activity that was not required, as when Repeka fell in love with words. Each morning she would come rushing in all aglow and want to know what "acquisition" was--or "performance" or some other long word. Her only requirement was that the word be a long one! Repeka gained two years in those six weeks. Probably her daily search for long words, anywhere she could find them, had much to do with her dramatic gain.

Other less frequent but interesting activities involved the use of telephones, a tape recorder, and a video-tape recorder.

Individualized Reading

While everything I believed in worked, the most comforting of all was self-selection in reading. Nothing worked so dramatically as reading books, and having individual teacher-pupil conferences with staff.

We began with about six hundred paperback books from the "Reader's Choice" Catalog of Scholastic Press. These were spread out daily, face up, on two or three tables. While the college faculty had long laughed about the fact that they could always leave books around without fear of them being taken, in this case our books disappeared by the dozens. Frequent pleadings would bring some returns as the supply dwindled, but we were frankly delighted that they seemed so worthwhile to the students. Many books were permanently "borrowed." Other faculty members remarked on the unprecedented sight of our class members sitting, standing, or belly flopping on the grass READING.

This free reading was begun with a training session on the Rule of Thumb. Each student was asked to demonstrate that this rule was understood and followed. The following quote from "Staff Material" illustrates how our reading period proceeded:

1. Make sure they used the Rule of Thumb.

2. Make sure they list the book in their notebook.

3. Make sure they are ready for your attention. Never confer with an unprepared student.

4. Follow these four steps:

   a. Explore their personal interest in the book.

   b. Does he "get it?" If not, explain.

   c. Work on the hard words in profitable ways.

   d. Hear him read aloud. Help guide. Give him a proper model for oral reading.

Each student was asked to have a conference with one of the staff as often as possible. This turned out to be a problem as there were too many pupils and too few staff. No different from most, they LOVED the individual conference, and some had to be watched that others not be deprived of the opportunity. The delight of this activity was universal.

In short, it can be seen that our mornings never dragged. Three hours flew. The morale was such that attendance was good. Even on mornings following some celebration, they came in. They might have been a bit hung over, but they came in. The look on Lei's face as he struggled to say in English how he enjoyed coming to class. It turned out he had a bleeding ulcer, but he was there. It should be stated that we never took roll, and we never gave grades on anything. We knew them and they knew us. Joyita might write about the girl who moved in with him and would not go home, but he wrote.

As to the out-of-class time that was spent by the staff, it was barely 30 minutes a day. The demands of the writings and the comments to be made thereon were shifted from one to the other. But rather than a chore we soon found it more of a privilege to be asked for. Why? Because the writings were fun to read!! And the gains were so obvious they were sometimes quite an ego trip for the one doing the reading.

Each day ended with a staff planning time. One staff member was terrified to teach in front of the rest of us, but she found an activity she so enjoyed doing that her fears did not materialize, and her teaching performance was charming. Thus activities were set and the one to "run" them decided upon. I

can recall that at no time was there any reluctance. We all enjoyed being there and teaching our class.

I was continually exhilarated by the evidence that everything I believed in worked. I used their own speech and they learned. I respected their choices of topics to write about, their own choices of what books to read and they grew intellectually. I taught them the skills they need to know from within their own cultural patterns and personality. Fa'a Samoa was the bottom line. We all came out better people and smarter people, and most certainly happier people. It was a magnificent exercise in how learning can take place.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE CONTENT AREAS

Sarah Hudelson
Arizona State University

Language development, in this paper, is not synonomous with a person's ability to use standard language. It also does not refer to a person's ability to memorize isolated vocabulary items, the "learn ten new words a day" phenomenon. Rather, it is the variety of ways in which a person uses language, the functions that language serves. If adults use language in certain ways, perhaps children, too, should be provided with opportunities to use language in a variety of ways. And if the consideration is children in school, then the structuring of both oral and written language for a variety of functions in school must be considered.

What are language functions? In other words, what is it that people do with language in particular contexts? What is it that a fairly effective user of language is able to do with language? This question will be approached from the points of view of three people who have concerned themselves with language use. After summarizing some of their ideas, an attempt will be made to fuse them together; then suggestions will be offered about ways classroom activities may be structured to give children the opportunities to use language in specific kinds of ways, particularly in the content areas.

Theories of Language Functions

M. B. K. Halliday, a noted linguist, delineates several ways in which he sees language functioning for people (1973). He suggests that one function of language is the instrumental function, in which language is used to ask for something: "please give me that," "I would like you to help me with this."

A second function of language Halliday defines is a regulatory function. Halliday suggests that a person uses language in this way to tell another person what to do. It is thus a "do as I tell you" function: "I would like you to do this," "I would like you to agree with me."

A third function that Halliday deals with is one that is exemplified by our everyday dealings with other people. He calls this a social or interactional function. We use language to maintain contacts with other people often for no other reason than that it is pleasing to do so.

A fourth function that Halliday deals with is the personal function. We all have some kind of need to express ourselves as unique persons. The focus is "Here I am and I am distinct from anyone in the world." When we use this function we express ourselves as unique human beings. Sometimes this expression of self is most concerned not with explaining the self to others but with clarifying oneself to oneself. The personal function then emphasizes communicating with oneself and then, if one chooses, communicating that self to someone else. Personal communication must be seen as the self in communication with the self, in the individual expression of uniqueness, as an individual and with others.

The fifth function that Halliday deals with is the heuristic function, the questioner in all of us. We use language to ask questions. "Why is such and so?" "Who is such and such person?" "What is that?" We try to find out what is going on in the world around us. Language is used in exploring and questioning the environment.

A sixth function that Halliday concerns himself with is an imaginative function or the "let's pretend" function. Halliday states that all of us have needs, desires and abilities to think about and to imagine worlds other than the one we are in. Imagine that you were on a spaceship going to the new world. Imagine that you lived a hundred years ago, or that you will live a hundred years from now. What would you do? Imagine that you are a poet and that you are looking at the world as a poet. How do you see it? How will you deal with the world? What kinds of things will you write about? Halliday is saying that all of us are dreamers and visionaries.

The seventh and last function that Halliday defines is representational. Here language is used to let other people know what you know. Language serves a "let me tell you about this" role. Language is used to inform other people about who we are, what we think, and so on. Halliday, then, sees language users as utilizing language in these seven basic ways.

A second author who considers language aims is a man names James Kinneavy. In a book titled A Theory of Discourse (1971) Kinneavy defines four basic functions or aims of language. In any communication context, Kinneavy posits, people use language in one or more of these four basic ways.

First, people use language in a referential way. This compares with Halliday's idea of using language to represent something. Language is used to provide information to others. Language may be used, either orally or in writing, to narrate an event, to share ideas, to talk about people, events, and so on.

The second aim of discourse that Kinneavy defines is the persuasive aim, using language to get people to do what you would like them to do. People use language not only to express their opinions but also to coerce someone else to perform a certain action or to agree with a certain opinion.

The third aim that Kinneavy writes about is a much more personalized one. He calls this the aim of self expression. We use language in self reflection, which means thinking to oneself, talking to oneself, working through one's ideas, thoughts, and values. At times we may choose to share with other people but at other times we keep our reflections private and personal. The primary aim of self expression is not to tell others what one is thinking but to express oneself for oneself. Only secondarily is someone else involved. Firstly, I am resolving things in my own mind, in my own languaging. Then I may share them with you.

The fourth aim that Kinneavy considers is the literary aim. His focus here is on the creative aspect of language and the enjoyment of language for its own sake. This may involve, for example, looking at a sunset and then expressing joy in it in a composed, literary way. One may use poetry, story form, songs, limericks, and so on. Composing, somewhat formally, is the emphasis, involving the use of many literary devices associated with formal language. While most people would associate this function more with written examples, Kinneavy suggests that this aim could be achieved orally as well as in writing.

A third author to be considered in this paper is James Britton. In a volume that emphasizes realistic language use in classroom settings (1970), Britton suggests that any of us who are language users take two roles: participant and spectator.

As participants we are concerned about the clarity with which we get a message across to other people. How am I communicating to you? Do you know what my opinions are? Have I given you enough information? Am I looking at things from your point of view? This idea goes along with that of using language to ask questions, to inform, and to regulate others' behavior in thoughts. The focus is clarity of communication. We cue in on our participation as a language user with others in a kind of communicative process.

In the role of spectator the user turns inward. Language is used to examine feelings, ideas, values, joys and pleasures. Language is used first to express oneself in ways that are pleasurable to one's self and second, in ways that may be shared with other people. This spectator role, this stepping back and working things out, seems to fit more into the ideas of seeing language as something formalized, and as something involving composition, encompassing the self-expressive, imaginative, and literary aims.

In general, then, Halliday and Kinneavy propose that people use language in various ways, and that these uses are functional to the language user. Britton separates these purposes or functions of language into particular roles that a language user assumes. In considering the ideas of each of these theorists, it seems possible to combine their considerations, and to formulate a basic set of language functions applicable to oral and written situations.

A Definition of Language Functions

I would define four major language functions as: 1) informational, 2) persuasive, 3) personal expression and 4) literary-creative.

In the first function, people use language to ask questions and to find out information. Language in this function may be used both to seek and to share information. This may be done in an oral form or in a written form. Often this is done (as Halliday's interactional function posits) within the context of a social situation. As interactions are opened and maintained, information is given and received.

The second major function of language may be called a persuasive function (a combination of regulatory, instrumental, personal, and representational

aims of language). The focus of this function is the expression of opinions in attempts to get others to express their ideas, to agree with the speaker, to reach consensus, to formulate a plan of action, and so on. In a classroom situation, if children are involved in deciding what to do in free time, what kind of game to play, or where to go on their next field trip, such discussions involve using language to persuade others.

The third major function of language is that of personal expression, stepping back from situations and thinking them through or talking them through or writing them through. Talking to oneself is a perfect example of the personal expression function of language. Sometimes we use language to express ourselves to ourselves; at other times we use language to express ourselves to others. I would distinguish between the personal function and the informational function by stating that there is a difference between sharing information and choosing to share your feelings, values and opinions with another person. There is a qualitative difference. If, as ourselves, we are sharing (with ourselves or with others) opinions, values, gut emotions, what matters to us, we have moved from a strictly information giving function into a function of personal expression. What is in the realm of self expression may be kept to oneself or it may be shared if a climate of trust has been developed.

The final function language serves is a literary-creative one. All people have within them the desire and the need to use language in a composing fashion, to create or to recreate something that has had meaning for them. To play with language, to consider special effects that one may create with language, to take one's ideas and to recreate them with a specific audience in mind, all of these aspects are involved in the literary-creative function of language.

Using Language in the Classroom

Teachers, and other adults, i.e., effective users of language, can promote these four language functions in schools. And adults do use language in the various ways described. For example, when the president speaks to Congress or to the nation, he uses language in informative and often persuasive ways. He asks questions, he provides information, he tries to persuade people to adopt his points of view, sharing with his listeners some of his personal values and ideals.

A politician uses language in literary ways. Images such as "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" are typical of this kind of language use. Teachers need to consider ways to facilitate opportunities for children to use language in their classrooms. This does not mean programming for one right answer or filling out dittos and passing the test. It does mean organizing a classroom so that activities focus on children using language in the ways that have been defined here. The emphasis, then, is on process rather than on product.

Using Language in the Content Classroom

Some ideas about using the content areas to facilitate language development can be generated from existing content area materials. Let's consider a few examples, pulled from commercial texts currently in use in public schools.

Take, for example, a primary science unit that focuses on seed germination. In small groups, children decide on several places where they will plant seeds, in order to discover where seeds will grow most successfully. Using their experiential backgrounds, the children are involved in telling their friends about what they know about good conditions for seed growth (using language in an informative way). Children must then decide, in a group, where they will plant their seeds (informing and persuading). Group hypotheses about germination results may be written down for future reference. Later, results can be noted to determine which conditions were most favorable for germination and growth. Children would again be using language in informing and persuading ways. To include literary and self expressive language functions in this science material, the teacher might share the book The Carrot Seed. This could lead to a discussion of how individual children would feel if they were the little boy in the story (self expressive). Stories could also be created by the children (literary). Children might imagine themselves as seeds and describe, orally or in writing, how they would feel as they broke ground, how the sun would feel, and so on (self expressive and literary). In addition, children might choose to grow their favorite flowers and share them. In these activities language is used in more personal and compositional ways.

Intermediate math/science material on measurement can provide a focus for using language for several different aims. Small groups of children are given pencils or slips of paper of varying lengths. Each child in the small group is measured using a different pencil or paper, and then the groups compare their measurements (using the informing function of language). As they compare, they begin to see that without a standard unit for everyone to use, they really can't equate their measurements. The question of the need for standard measurement arises (informing and persuading functions). A debate on the merits of metric versus nonmetric measurement may follow. This activity involves using language both to inform and to persuade. To extend this theme into the literary-expressive aims, play the song "Inch Worm, Inch Worm." Leo Lionni's book, Inch by Inch, could be read. Having heard the song and/or read the book, have pupils imagine themselves as the tiny creatures. How would they view the world? What kinds of adventures might they have? The children might begin this activity by considering privately what their reactions are (self-expression) and then move to a more literary vein (sharing their impressions and composing them in more formal ways).

Fourth grade social studies material is also useful. A chapter in the text might concentrate on the ideas of markets, buyers, sellers, and the chain of production-consumption. To illustrate the idea of the interdependence of producers and consumers, each pupil receives a three by five card on which a particular role has been written. Students are then asked to organize groups and role play situations involving production, selling and consumer demand. This activity involves using language to inform and to persuade, as students come to an agreement about what they will role play. To focus on the ideas of supply and demand an activity such as small group invention of new products and the development of advertising campaigns for these products may be done. Pupils would need to construct their own advertising slogans and commercials. This would involve using language in both persuasive and literary ways.

In the art class, an activity involving creation of secondary colors from primary colors could include the use of language in several ways. Pupils begin by hypothesizing about what new colors will be created from the combining of basic colors. As the new colors are created, pupils could record what actually happened. They would then compare the results to what they had hypothesized (using language in an informative

way). Give the children the opportunity to use the colors in an art project, choosing the colors they want to use and sharing with others in an informal way what their favorites are and why (self expressive function of language). Koch's book Wishes, Lies and Dreams can lead students to create poems from the lines "Red is.....," "Yellow is.....," "Green is.....," and so on. In this way language is used in a literary way.

These are just a few examples of the ways in which language development may be facilitated through content area activity. What do all of these activities have in common? Several things. In all of them, the focus is on process (the languaging), not product. The objective is doing the activity, not coming up with a right answer. All of the examples involve children in activities. Children do and talk and talk and do. They do not simply sit and listen and read. They are active participants in a process, not passive receptacles for a variety of facts. Children talk and act about real things, real "stuff." The situations are contextful rather than contextless. And the teacher is the facilitator for the children, not the Big T, nor the possessor of an unending stream of knowledge. Recently, a colleague of mine in science education shared with me a comment from one of his children's teachers. The teacher told my colleague that schools were spending so much time teaching the basics of reading and math that there was no time for the fun things like science, social studies and art. I would respond that, as demonstrated in this article, that these "fun" areas are not frills but are indeed basic. Because through them we may help our children become effective users of language. And I know of nothing more basic than that.

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READABILITY CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED SUPPLEMENTARY SKILLS MATERIAL

Keith J. Thomas
Arizona State University

For years professionals in the field of reading have emphasized the necessity for appropriate placement of students in materials utilized during basic instruction. Careful match-up between students' instructional levels and readability of textbooks has been advocated. Informal assessment procedures involving materials actually used during teaching have been recommended by Johnson and Kress (1965). In addition, specialized instruments (Silvaroli, 1973; Smith & Smith, 1972; and Botel, 1970) have been developed to assist teachers in determining the levels at which students should actually be instructed.

Bradley and Ames (1976, 1977a, 1977b) found substantial intra- and intertest variability of reading levels in basal materials, suggesting that matching student competencies to appropriate levels in materials may be a considerably more complicated and arduous task than heretofore thought.

One class of commonly found instructional resources virtually ignored in similar readability investigations is material published for, or commonly relegated to, so-called "independent reading activities." The importance and/or necessity of independent work activities is well documented in professional references on reading pedagogy, and justifications for such experiences range from the pragmatic to the philosophical (Russell, 1961; Karlin, 1971; Zintz, 1975; and Harris & Smith, 1976). Despite variations most references cite two critical points: 1) the need for students to engage in independent reading activities in order to practice, maintain, and extend skills learned during teacher-directed instruction, and 2) the need for such activities to be both meaningful and worthwhile, and to be differentiated according to student needs and abilities.

While publication of graded supplementary materials, in kit form or otherwise, has helped in the implementation of independent reading activities, placement decisions in supplementary materials need careful attention. Unfortunately, little empirical research has been directed at evaluating the

readability characteristics of materials commonly used during independent reading experiences. Such investigative efforts would seem particularly warranted given:

1. the increasing frequency with which one notes independent activities being incorporated into regular instructional programs,

2. the increasing amount of supplementary material being published for purposes of providing practice selections and exercises designed to augment basic instruction, or

3. the startling findings of Bradley and Ames regarding the variance in difficulty levels within and between basal readers--materials which are generally considered to be carefully controlled in terms of such factors as readability.

With these specific concerns in mind, a readability analysis of representative materials often associated with independent work was conducted.

Method

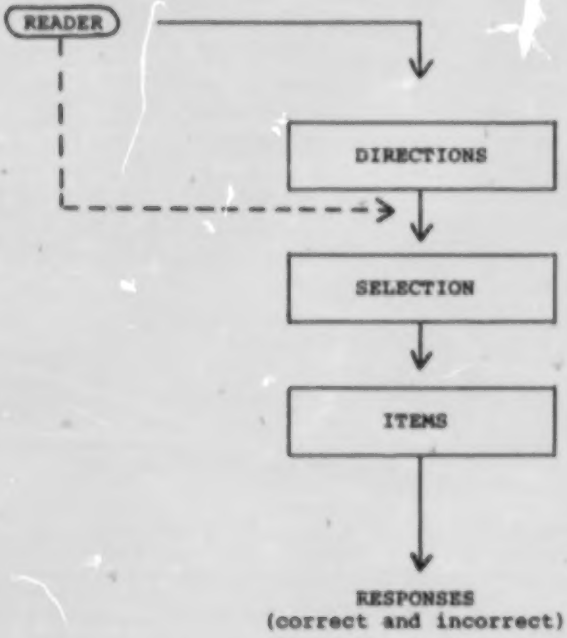
In establishing parameters for the analysis, supplementary materials either specifically developed for, or commonly used for application or practice of a specific skill or cluster of related skills, were deemed acceptable for assessment. Based on a conceptualization of reader tasks during independent activities (See Figure I), two categories of materials were established: 1) exercises which included rather lengthy directions designed to prepare the learner for the accompanying skills tasks and 2) exercises in which the actual skill selection was preceded by a minimal set of directions or no directions at all. In the material from the first category, only the directions were analyzed; from the second category, only the actual reading selections were evaluated.

Reading Development II, a prototype set of skills exercises developed by SWRL Educational Research and Development (1977), was chosen as representative of the first category of materials. According to the publishers, this kit is designed for use in the middle grades, specifically grade five.

Eight books of graded exercises from Boning's Specific Skill Series, published by Barnell Loft, Ltd.

Figure I

SCHEMATIC OF TASKS



(1970, 1971, 1976), were selected as representative of material from the second category. Included were Levels D, E, F, and G (equivalent to grade placements of 4, 5, 6, and 7 respectively) from Getting the Main Idea and Drawing Conclusions.

On the basis of Vaughn's (1976) comments regarding interpretation of readability measures, two formulas were employed to analyze the materials: the latest revision of Fry's procedure (1977) and the SMOG Grading System (McLaughlin, 1969). According to Vaughn (p. 638), these formulas are based upon different comprehension criteria; as such, Fry's procedure yields grade-level equivalents comparable to functional comprehension falling somewhere between the traditional frustration and instructional placement levels (comprehension range = 50% - 75%); SMOG Grading yields ratings that can be interpreted as being more representative of functional comprehension at the independent reading level (comprehension range = 90% - 100%).

Directions for 21 of the exercises from Reading Development II (approximately 40% of the total) were evaluated. This sample included a minimum of two sets of directions from each of the five skill clusters in the scope and sequence of instructional activities contained in the kit.

A random sample of 10% of the total exercises from each Specific Skills booklet was also drawn for analysis (an overall total of 80 different selections). The Specific Skills samples were stratified across texts with three selections drawn from the first one-third of each booklet, four selections from the middle one-third, and three selections from the final one-third. All samples from both categories of materials were analyzed with both readability procedures.

Findings

Overall results of the readability analyses regarding the sample of directions from Reading Development II are reported in Table I. Entries in the column on the left represent specific exercises and are identified under the skill clusters contained in the kit. The middle columns include the readability values according to Fry and SMOG ratings respectfully. The column on the right indicates the amount of difference between the two ratings and which formula yielded the higher value: F (Fry) or S (SMOG). Among the findings noted were the following:

Table I

ANALYSIS OF EXERCISE DIRECTIONS

*Target Cluster and Skill	Fry Reading Level	SMOG Reading Level	Difference
Interpretation Skills: Word and Phrase Meaning	6	7	S:+1
	7	9	S:+2
	6	10	S:+4
Interpretation Skills: Sentence and Paragraph Meaning	7	10	S:+3
	7	8	S:+1
	7	7	--
	7	9	S:+2
	4	7	S:+3
Interpretation Skills: Relationships	9	11	S:+2
	6	8	S:+2
	8	11	S:+3
	12	13	S:+1
	7	9	S:+2
Study Skills: Information Location	7	9	S:+2
	9	10	S:+1
	10	10	--
	11	11	--
	7	8	S:+1
Study Skills: Graphic Information	5	7	S:+2
	2	5	S:+3
	5	7	S:+2

N = 21 $\bar{M}$=7.1 R=2-12 $\bar{M}$=8.8 R=5-13 S:+1.7

* Reading Development II, SWRL Ed. Research and Development, 1977.

1. Regardless of readability formula used, a wide range in the relative difficulty levels of the directions was in evidence.

2. The range in readability levels included some directions that were written at or below the grade level for which the material was intended, but this occured with only 19% of the samples as evaluated by the Fry scale and less than 5% of the same samples as evaluated by SMOG Grading.

3. The average readability of all sample directions exceeded the recommended grade level assignment of the materials. The average Fry value was 2.1 grade levels above the intended grade placement; the average SMOG Grading was 3.8 grade levels above the intended placement level.

4. With the exception of three sets of directions, all samples rated higher readability levels when evaluated with SMOG Grading. On the average, the SMOG ratings were 1.7 grade levels higher than their corresponding Fry values.

5. Readability variance of the directions within the sequence of the kit was in evidence. Directions for exercise clusters at the beginning of the kit were generally no easier than those at the end. In fact, the opposite tended to be the case.

Overall results of the analyses regarding passages from Getting the Main Idea and Drawing Conclusions are reported in Table 2. In the table, entries on the left indicate the specific booklets evaluated. Listed across from each entry are the number of samples rated, and the mean and range of the Fry and SMOG values. The column on the right indicates the amount of difference between the two mean values and which procedure yielded the higher rating: F (Fry) or S (SMOG). Among the findings noted were the following:

1. Regardless of readability formula used, a minimum range in difficulty of three grade levels was found in the samples from each booklet.

2. The range in readability levels within booklets varied from level to level in both skill areas. These ranges included passages

Table 2

ANALYSIS OF TEXTUAL SELECTIONS

MATERIAL*	NUMBER OF SAMPLES	FRY READABILITY		SMOG READABILITY		MEAN DIFFERENCE
Getting the Main Idea		M	R	M	R	
++ Level D (gr.4)	10	6.0	2-8	8.1	7-9	S:+2.1
+ Level E (gr.5)	10	6.4	5-7	8.8	8-10	S:+2.4
** Level F (gr.6)	10	10.5	8-13	12.2	11-14	S:+1.7
+ Level G (gr.7)	10	10.6	8-17	12.3	11-16	S:+1.7
Drawing Conclusions		M	R	M	R	
++ Level D (gr.4)	10	6.2	3-9	7.8	5-10	S:+1.6
+ Level E (gr.5)	10	6.7	4-9	8.7	6-10	S:+2.0
** Level F (gr.6)	10	10.2	7-14	12.7	11-15	S:+2.5
+ Level G (gr.7)	10	10.8	7-17	12.0	9-16	S:+1.2

++ 1970 Edition
** 1971 Edition
+ 1976 Edition

* Source: Specific Skills Series, Barnell Loft, Ltd.

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which were consistent with the intended grade level, but this occured only in Levels D and E in both skill areas, and only with the Fry readability ratings. None of the samples were rated at the intended levels according to SMOG Grading.

3. With the exception of Level F, there was overlapping from level to level in both skill areas regardless of the readability procedure employed. In other words, the lowest sample in each successive level was lower than the highest rated sample from the preceding level.

4. Irrespective of intended grade level, skill area, or formula used, the average readability of samples drawn from each booklet exceeded the grade level for which the material was intended. The greatest discrepancy, regardless of formula, occured in Level F of both skill areas; the least discrepancy among the Fry ratings occured with Level E in both skill areas; with SMOG Grading, the least discrepancy in Getting the Main Idea occured in Level F; in Drawing Conclusions, Level D.

5. Although there was intertext variability, booklets in both skill areas tended to be written on increasing levels of difficulty. This was noted in all cases of Fry ratings; one exception was found in SMOG Grading: in Drawing Conclusions, Level F appeared on the average to be at least as difficult as Level G.

Implications

The following statements are divided into two areas: those based on findings relating to the analyses of directions and those based on the analyses of actual reading passages.

Directions

To the extent that the specific sample may be representative of other supplementary reading materials, the following statements are warranted:

1. In supplementary reading materials used for independent work activities, directions may be written at levels that are inconsistent with the intended grade level of usage. The inability of students to complete such exercises successfully may reflect a lack of "understanding what to do" rather than deficiency in the ability to apply the specific skills needed.

2. In judging the suitability of supplementary materials, teachers should consider not only the appropriateness of the target activity, but also the comprehensibility of the directions. This would appear to be particularly important if students are expected to work exercises without any teacher assistance.

3. Depending on the exact characteristics of orchestrating independent reading activities, it may be more appropriate to assess the readability of directions with procedures (such as SMOG Grading) which are based on higher comprehension criteria than some of the more commonly used formulas which are based on lower comprehension criteria.

Passages

To the extent that the specific material sampled is representative of other supplementary reading materials, the following comments are appropriate:

1. In supplementary materials used to reinforce, maintain, or practice learned skills, the reading selections may be written at levels that exceed the intended grade of usage. However, on the average, materials published in graded series may well be written on ascending levels of difficulty. (That is, the first book will likely be easier than the second, the second easier than the third, etc.).

2. In evaluating the suitability of practice exercises, the specific skills in question should be carefully analyzed. If the learner must have maximum control over the selection in order to complete tasks, readability should be assessed with formulas based on rigorous comprehension criteria.

3. Since it is possible that substantial intra- and inter-textual variance will exist in supplementary practice exercises, careful monitoring by the teacher of student performance and progress is necessary.

4. Depending on the specific skill in question, students may have difficulty in successfully completing exercises because of the complexity of the reading selection rather than lack of ability to apply the needed target skill(s). This may be particularly true if the skills are of an interpretive rather than literal nature.

Recommendations and Concluding Statement

Based on the results of this investigation, the following general recommendations are offered.

1. Analyses similar to the one reported need to be carried out with many more samples of various types of supplementary materials to determine if the specific findings represent general tendencies.

2. In considering supplementary materials for either acquisition or implementation, readability parameters should be identified through the use of acceptable procedures/formulas. Such evaluations actually may be carried out for two purposes: (1) to determine whether certain materials are suitable for a given program component, or (and perhaps more importantly) (2) to determine the most appropriate manner in which to use certain material.

3. Readability of material is only one criterion upon which to base educational decisions and, in fact, probably is not the most important. Readability formulas are based on mathematical assumptions (quantitative properties) and are subject to errors in measurement. Few, if any, take into account such highly significant qualitative factors as interest, motivation, and familiarity with topics.

4. The indiscriminate placement of students in supplementary materials for independent

reading activities appears unjustifiable. Placement decisions should be made with caution and student performance should be carefully monitored.

5. Publisher's information regarding specific supplementary materials should be read carefully and studied. Significant points involving recommended use of the materials generally accompany such materials but are frequently ignored or overlooked by the classroom teacher. In Reading Development II, for example, the authors state that "tutorial instruction conducted by teachers or aides" may be necessary with some students.* In the Specific Skills material, the author clearly states that the booklets "are designed for readers who can effectively handle difficult material" at the respective intended grade levels.** This type of information should not be disregarded.

The purpose of this study was to describe the readability characteristics of specific supplementary materials frequently associated with independent reading activities. The study was extremely limited in scope and the generalizability of the findings should be limited to the specific materials included in the analyses. Furthermore, the findings should in no way be misconstrued as a condemnation of either the particular materials analyzed or the categories of published materials which they presumably represent. Problems encountered in the successful and appropriate utilization of supplementary materials generally emanate from faulty implementation practices, not from the material itself. These unfortunate occurrences are not the responsibility of authors or publishers, but rather the individual who is directly accountable for the success or failure of any instructional component, namely the classroom teacher.

* Quote taken from "Resource Inventory: Reading Development Skills II."

** Quote taken from "To the Teacher," a section found in each booklet from the Specific Skills Series.

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READING RESEARCH LOOKS TO GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY, AND CULTURE

Christine W. Lucas
McGill University

The thrust of reading research in the past decade has swung from a concern with reading as an isolated subject to a concern with reading within the continuum of communication where it now shares an equal relationship with other areas of language learning and acquisition (Radwin & Wolf-Ward, 1977). This relationship is a most important world-wide movement since the more recent philosophy of language accepts reading as an equal partner within other modes of human symbolic processing (Wolf, 1978). When we read a book or a sign or a blueprint or a painting or a concerto or the face of a loved one, we share a human communication that is universal.

It is this human symbolic processing that brings together our resources and our peoples, a base upon which we have built the major establishments or organizations of stable government, of vibrant industry, and of a vigorous culture. These establishments, in turn, support a massive educational research system which functions and operates within the total framework of the national social and economic order.

The interdependence among these establishments suggests that the functions and operations of reading research depend upon the reconciliation of the needs of these vital groups with the needs and aims of our own reading and language system. Furthermore, while we need to acknowledge the support and demands which flow to us from government, industry, and culture, we need also to acknowledge our responsibilities to these same avenues of support. It is time to review the response of reading research to governmental, industrial, and cultural needs--and in that order.

Reading Research and Government

A stable government depends upon an educated populace for social and economic support of its domestic and foreign policies. This truism is so well understood that the international and national support for reading and language research is almost unlimited.

For example: The Council of Europe and the British Council in London support many international programs in first and second language learning. The National Education Bureau of Sweden supports research in all areas of reading and language learning.

In our own country, the federal government supports reading and language research through widely dispersed agencies and activities. Table 1 lists some of the more prominent agencies, each of which maintains a component within the area of reading research.

Table 1

FEDERAL SUPPORT AGENCIES IN RESEARCH

AGENCY	
Health, Education & Welfare (HEW)	supervision all elementary, secondary, education and vocational education programs; migrant education, etc.
National Institute Education	supervision early childhood education; medical schools; research facilities
State Department	supervision military academies and military education
National Institute Mental Health	supervision child language development, especially semantics and linguistics
Association Education and Communication & Technology	supervision research in mathematics, arithmetic algorithms, chemistry, laboratory research

While these agencies wield much influence upon research habits, the House Committee on Education and Labor wields even more power. This committee

processes all federal legislation for all educational programs, planning, and development (Miller & Mathews, 1977). In 1976 alone, the House Committee on Education and Labor authorized the spending of $15 billion, the bulk of which was earmarked for reading and language research as related to instructional practices for pupils and schools.

This committee has sponsored two major laws which may augment the role of reading research: the Vocational Act of 1963 (Kliever, 1965) which encompasses aid to industrial educational programs, and the more recent Handicapped Children Act, PL 94-142 (1975) which provides district support for all handicapped children (Keller, 1977). Both laws support changes in classroom procedures and practices. Let us consider first the impact of these acts as translated through recent industrial activities.

Reading Research and Industry

The Vocational Act of 1963 (Kliever, 1965) was developed to increase the employability of untrained youth and "unautomated" adults. Slow to make its impact upon education, the Act supported industry in its demand for better trained personnel. Here and there, school directors began to change curriculum to meet the new demands. As yet, programs are not fully developed, but progress toward implementation of the legislation's intent is apparent. In 1969-70, only one Vocational Education research study appeared in the literature (Ehrenreich, 1970). By 1977, however, some 19 research studies on vocational education alone had appeared (Calling, 1977).

Several nationwide research projects are noteworthy because they have attacked the problems of deficient language and reading skills within the current industrial-labor scene. Addington (1977) reports a cooperative program between labor unions and area schools in Arkansas. Union apprentices developed skills in vocational subjects, and reading and writing moved into the labor market. In Pennsylvania another labor union instigated the development of oral language in a pluralistic language community in order to save the factory and jobs. Once materials and courses were developed, the factory workers put aside their Pidgin language and learned to communicate in oral and printed language. Similar accounts and projects are underway in nearly every state. Such universities as Wisconsin, Florida State, and Kentucky have

developed research programs funded through the Vocational Act. Often these programs concentrate upon a teacher training component, since teachers are rarely trained to teach non-academic subjects (Bicket, 1977).

Reading researchers have remained somewhat aloof from these areas, preferring perhaps to concentrate on more established fields. But governmental, industrial, and societal activists do not wait for researchers to adjust their research sights. Still, reading researchers can move quickly, one example of which is the rapid response to industrial and governmental needs in the field of electronics. As early as 1973, 39 reading research programs in computer-assisted instruction (CAI) were reported (Haye & Wang, 1973, 491-504).

Reading researchers are using computers to develop motivation and independence in language and skill acquisition. A recent study (Seidal, Wagner, Rosenblatt, Hillelson & Stelzer, 1978) has concluded that learners can control instructional sequencing within the CAI environment. Stanford University has used CAI in an elementary logic course (Larsey, Markasian, & Suppes, 1978). In other CAI programs, pupils are responding to math tutoring, to reading remediation, even to chess games. The research does not indicate how teachers respond, nor what further programs will be developed or required for CAI individualized instruction.

Similarly, the Handicapped Children Act or PL 94-142 (1975) has brought the handicapped child into the regular classroom. One could ask where the research is that is needed to help both teacher and pupil develop a satisfactory reading and language learning environment for all children. Presently, the popular idea of mainstreaming, i.e., incorporation of the handicapped child into the regular classroom, is promoted through this legislation. The necessary support services required to bring the blind or deaf or palsied or quadraplegic child into the regular classroom remain undeveloped. Teachers and average children need specific assistance to include the handicapped child into the usual classroom routines and instruction.

Reading Research and the Cultural Establishment

Reading researchers hear many voices from dissatisfied cultural groups. Among these are the voices

of the graying population, as well as those of parents and legislators. These voices translate into demands for additional continuing education, more Back to Basics Programs, and more competent graduates.

Adult education programs have long been with us, but we have focused mainly upon those individuals who either lacked the opportunity to build functional skills or who were failures within the present system (Cook, 1977; Sticht, 1975). The National Center for Education notes that a huge educational market is developing for those adults already trained but who may seek another career, perhaps because of early retirement (Maeroff, 1978).

Reading researchers are exhorted by both government and industry to enter further into this field. Unless we accept our responsibility, we may find that government and industry will develop their own teams and programs without our aid.

On another issue, we have remained strangely quiet. The social and economic pressures upon universities, upon secondary and elementary systems, are meeting little resistance from reading researchers. This is readily apparent in the Back to Basics issue. Already state and local governments, plus parents and taxpayers, have plunged into the Back to Basics movement. Under the guise of developing more efficient students, the governments have mandated minimum proficiency standards which are later to be interpreted through the law courts (Baratz, 1977). Such actions bypass reading research.

Our voices need to be heard on controversial issues to verify our positions with solid research and statistical evidence that supports or denies a pressing issue.

It may be that we have been so engrossed in specific areas of reading and language research that we have not recognized the necessity to produce a functionally literate human being who can communicate within the human environment.

We have been concerned with bilingualism and communication to the extent that we may not have realized the impact of ethnicity upon our national life. Presently, the ethnic pressures have forced government support for language and reading research in the creolization issue, i.e., the meeting of one language with another to form a communication in a third language (Schumann, 1975, 137-152). In turn,

Creolization has brought the fossilization issue to the foreground. Researchers are concerned that language and reading often develop to a certain level and no further (Selinker, 1975, 114-136).

As a result of the ethnic pressures, federal and state agencies have financially supported multitudinous studies in oral language development and dialectical usage. More and more statistical data have been gathered which suggest that we treat reading as a global process within the total language process, rather than as isolated content.

Summary

Reading research interests and contributions to the establishments are more apparent if we compare the topical categories of the reported studies of 1968-69 with those of 1973-74. The first sections of Specific Aspects of Reading in the Table of Contents from the Reading Research Quarterly issues give sufficient evidence of the response to the establishment needs (Weintraub, Robinson, Smith, 1970; Weintraub, Robinson, Smith, Plessas & Rowls, 1974-75).

The emphasis in research within that five-year period indicates that there is more interest in readiness and language acquisition than in beginning reading. Research interest in sex roles in literature ranks before college reading. Research into learning disabilities and mental retardation ranks before language learning and reading. Research in linguistics and cognition has been added to specific aspects of reading.

We are now accustomed to research based upon the removal of stereotyped characters from basal readers, from attitudes, from casual conversation. Many recent research studies stress social problems and values. We appear to be moving beyond the narrow confines of school-based reading instruction to a broader perspective in which reading becomes an equal partner in all language areas of human communication.

It is this wider participation in national research that has brought additional financial and moral support from government, industry, as well as from society itself to reading research. At the same time, through its participation, reading research signifies its willingness to continue its contribution to the development of human communication in the chain of knowledge.

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TEACHING READING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CELEBRATION

Ralph L. Peterson
Arizona State University

That Tells You Something

Several weeks ago a sixth grader called my attention to how he moved rapidly from one level to the next in his reading. The key to what he called his short-cut was not to worry about the pre-test or waste time on the workbook and textbook. He explained, "What counts is the post test. You've got to ace the post. That's what really counts."

"That tells you something," his teacher said. "Children learn early that the name of the game in this program is to pass the post test."

Some days later I worked with a school committee developing test-based minimum competencies in reading for the Continuous Uniform Evaluation System (CUES). The task was to identify essential reading skills, develop related instructional strategies, and design assessment instruments that would indicate skill mastery.

Designing instructional strategies posed no great problem once we agreed on a skill and made up what we hoped was a valid test item. The strategies, quite simply, taught directly to the test. Getting agreement on what made up a necessary skill and valid test item, however, was uphill work. To make matters worse, committee members agreed that the emphasis upon minimum competency objectives was exacerbating an already unhealthy preoccupation with isolated skills and testing. That tells you something. I thought.

A few days later a friend brought an editorial to my attention. The writer's position was clear. Teachers were not putting enough effort into teaching basic reading skills. In keeping with Samuel Johnson's statement that the prospect of hanging concentrates the mind wonderfully, it recommended that children be tested on basic skills. If they failed, the teacher should be fired. "That tells you something," she said.

What it tells us, in case we hadn't heard, is teachers aren't so important these days. As

individual, thinking people we are no longer considered central to children's learning to read. Our job is to teach skills to the tune played by commercial reading programs and CUES committees. They tell us what to look for and how to respond. We are technicians who fit children to programs and shove them along pathways engineered to insure they can pass certain tests. Of course, it is an exaggeration to imply that all teachers allow others to do their seeing and thinking for them. But it is fair to say that teaching children to pass tests has become the number one concern of a growing number of teachers.

Testolatry

We have come to a point where tests are no longer viewed as means but have become ends in themselves. I coined a word to name this condition. The word is testolatry. Testolatry means excessive adoration, reverence, and devotion to testing.

Dedicated disciples and high priests of testolatry are seldom found in the ranks of practicing teachers. They reside in the state and national legislatures, on local and state school boards, in school administrative offices, in universities, and in parent groups. That is not to say that teachers don't play a key role in this new religion. They do, but most follow testolatry doctrine to avoid angering the ordained clergy. After all, jobs are hard to find.

Behavioral Objectives

There are several prophets of testolatry, but the true gospel can be found in Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. It is arguable whether Bloom is in fact the father of the testolatry commandments (1) Thou Shall Test, (2) Thou Shall Teach, (3) Thou Shall Test Again; but no one questions that his work is the foundation. Testolatry is rooted firmly in behavioral objectives. Objective behavior is its very substance. Testing is nothing more than the muscle; it puts teeth into the behavioral objective approach.

Two factors have contributed mightily to the rise of the behavioral objective approaches. First, behavioral objectives have a strong appeal because they are so practical. They stick to the real world,

reality being that which resides in the objective materials world, the world outside the imagination, the world that can be observed, counted, measured.

Second, ours is through and through a technological society. We are world champions of technology. Ours is a rational, manageable, and productive world. We live in an age of enlightened technocracy and we are impatient for progress. We expect reading scores, like American sex and American automobiles, to get better each year.

When products don't measure up to anticipated results we design a technology to get the job done. Johnson and Masters, for instance, probed the mysteries of the orgasm and charted pathways to sexual fulfillment. In the same spirit, educators analyzed the reading process in objective terms and applied behavior management principles to instruction. A no non-sense reading technology, designed to achieve prescribed results in a highly predictable manner, was forged.

The Criteria for Excellence developed by the Arizona Right to Read Effort provides a good example of a behavioral reading technology. It advocates the utilization of mastery learning environments. In brief, a mastery learning environment is founded on designing a test item for each curricular objective and then preparing an instructional task that is logically related to each test item. The task and tests are then utilized in a continuous diagnostic teaching sequence. For each objective, the teacher tests, instructs, re-tests, and then instructs again, if necessary. Ideally, the procedure continues until the student attains the objective.

It is a closed system. Results to be achieved are defined in advance. Next, instructional materials and tests are matched to the target objectives. It is a blueprint approach to achieving "right" answers.

A Partly Right Idea

It is time that we took note: in the field of reading things aren't getting any better. Reading scores are going down, not up. If testolatry were going to save us, surely we would have been given a sign by now.

Testolatry, like all false worship, has at its heart nothing more complex than a partly right idea. This is the problem. Nothing is so dangerous as a partly right idea. Being partly right, it builds false hope and expectation. We pursue the idea, confident that we are only a step away from succeeding. In fact, however, the idea is wrong-headed.

For example, objectives have been identified with increased specificity in an attempt to get the approach to work. The idea is that success will follow, if we are exacting. Reading programs exist today that list several hundred target objectives. There is no evidence, however, that they are more effective than programs focusing on a few dozen skills.

CUES gives another example of how we try to get this partly right idea to work. It has us teaching skills with increased intensity and attempting to insure mastery through testing. We blame ourselves and the children when achievement isn't on schedule. CUES is gospel. We reason that we simply must work harder. Ironically, chances are good that our target objectives are inappropriate and test items invalid. Getting the notion of CUES translated from theory to practice from district to district is something about which we know very little.

The behavioral objective approach is not entirely wrong. It would be easy to dispose of if it were. It works marvelously to teach specific skills, particularly in response to an immediate need. Problems arise, however, when the approach is used as an overall teaching strategy, when we attempt to engineer learning on a broad basis. Only when we cast behavioral objectives in a minor role and use them selectively, can they play a valuable part in the reading program.

Time to Question

It is time to recognize that we have attached a fictitious importance to the behavioral objective approach. For some time it has promised great possibilities, but has in fact delivered the most meager results. If anything, it has made our teaching mechanical: incapable of adjusting readily to each point to meet the needs of children and the situation.

When teaching is reduced to following a blueprint, it loses a necessary dynamic, creative quality. It is

not whole. There is no place for important knowledge teachers develop intuitively in encounters of the classroom kind.

Teaching is a many-sided undertaking requiring every bit of know-how we can muster. Knowledge that comes without knocking is every bit as important as studied rational formulations. Manuals that explain what to look for and how to respond simply are not enough.

It does not make sense to have more faith in tests and ideas than in the creative potential of teachers and children. Why should we put so much trust in exercise materials designed to fit all children at a grade level and no one child in particular? The direct study of learners by teachers on a day-to-day basis outfits the teacher with infinitely more useful knowledge than that gained from statistically manipulative test data.

Depersonalization of Learning

Depersonalization of learning has resulted from our pre-occupation with behavioral objectives and testing. A teacher cannot care adequately for the individual child when his first concern is having children act out someone else's plan.

One of the main functions of teaching is to engage to the fullest the child's own ability to mobilize the forces of mind and body in learning. Teaching in ways that help the child to be a self-project is the rightful work of the teacher. It is a tragic waste to have children learn to read in ways void of personal meaning.

Make the Child Basic

Breaking the hold behavioral objectives and testing have on our teaching of reading is not as difficult as it might first appear. It can be done by teaching in ways that celebrate the child's "lived" meaning, his willingness to work hard, his courage, his expressive know-how, and his accomplishments. When a child acts out someone else's plan there is no reason to celebrate. He has only gone along with many others in what was expected. But when we teach reading in personal ways, opportunities arise to

celebrate the child and his experience. We have made the child central. It is an old idea, but it couldn't be more important.

Before the rise of behavioral objectives and testolatry, child study was the key to teaching. Teachers engaged in the direct study of children. We schooled them to see steadily and whole, to see with a kind of nerve-end intuition. We let our minds prowl restlessly around the obvious and ordinary in search of relationships important to a child's learning.

It is time to return to the notion that the child is basic. Nothing is more real or compelling than a child who has a need to know. When we start with the child our teaching can achieve the dynamic, creative, personal quality needed to have an impact on the child's feelings, thinking, and self-image. When the child is central, teaching reading can lead to a celebration of life and the individual.

Why Celebrate

First, celebration has an important function to fulfill in teaching reading. When learning activities are dominated by reason and industry they run the risk of becoming dull and weary. Celebration, on the other hand, kindles a spark that offsets the highly cognitive. It outfits schooling with rhyme to balance reason. Education is enhanced.

Second, if we strive to teach in ways that will give cause to celebrate, we are certain to involve the child personally in the reading process. Nothing is more important. There is no replacement or substitute for the child's whole-hearted initiative. We enable what is valued in the life of the child. His "lived" meaning serves as content for language-reading activities. The significance of the child's doing, family, friends, pets, and neighborhood is illuminated. By personally involving the child, his world becomes subject matter for learning to read. We celebrate the significance of his life.

Third, celebration promotes learning. When we celebrate we separate what is purposeful and of value from the mundane and ordinary.

Chances to celebrate effort and achievement come to life when children are encouraged to take the initiative, test themselves, and exercise their

natural curiosity about the language reading world. Converting a story into a play and making the best experience chart yet are cause to celebrate. Putting together a classbook of pets, a child reading on his own for the first time, someone completing his first book and mastering a snaggy skill with teeth-gritting determination are all occasions to dignify work and success. When in February the too-hard books of September are passed around and the struggles and triumphs of the group's reading history reconstructed, it is an act of celebrating the capacity of the individual to strive and overcome difficulty.

Guideposts to Celebration

Teaching that allows the child to celebrate the import of his life cannot be reduced to a formula. It is the strength, knowledge, and imagination of the teacher that shows the way. Answers are worked out between the teacher and child; they're not to be found between the covers of a manual. At best, guideposts can be set about to give direction.

Experience. The great waste that results when the child is unable to put to use in school his early life experiences was emphasized by Dewey. He argued that in learning a child should not have to put out of his mind a large part of the ideas, interests, and activities that predominate in his home and neighborhood.

It is not necessary that a gap exist between the everyday experience of the child and the educational material he is supplied in learning to read. What he knows and experiences in daily living can be the content for discussion, reading and writing. We can put the child in touch with wonderful stories that he can entertain and enjoy. Skills need not be taught apart. They are in every instance at work, as he uses language to explore his world, communicate with others, solve problems, and enjoy himself.

Antecedent to teaching that makes the child the key to learning is a lively classroom environment designed to support the children's active involvement with selections of the language-reading world. It is a must that the environment be in keeping with the child's interests, abilities, and experiences if he is to take the initiative.

To illustrate, a teacher might teach reading to beginners along lines set down by Ashton-Warner. In

the Key Vocabulary Approach the first words a child learns to read do not come from basic word lists; nor are they selected on the basis of linguistic principles. The child's first words come from the fabric of the child's "lived" experience, thoughts, and feelings.

These are not ordinary words but power words weighted with passionate content in keeping with the child's internalized perceptions of the world. No recipe can be drawn up for securing such words. They must be freely given. It is up to the teacher to set the conditions that will nurture the trust and confidence necessary for the words to be freely given.

Purpose. Where purpose is concerned it is important not to confuse breadth of purpose with lack of purpose. A purpose is not less of a purpose because it is vague or more of a purpose because it is precise and the outcome vividly anticipated. For too long we have treated narrowness of purpose as a virtue. Our responsibility is to teach children to read; wherefore, purpose should fight vagueness of direction, but not at the expense of excluding the child's active participation.

By keeping purpose broad at the outset and clarifying it within the teaching encounter, activities can be shaped that are in personal agreement with the child's interests, disposition, and needs.

Risk Taking. Call upon children to risk. We pay a heavy price for our fear of failure. It is a powerful obstacle to growth, as it prevents exploration and experimentation. All authentic learning involves a certain amount of difficulty and fumbling. If we want our children to learn, we must encourage them to risk failure. So what if there are mistakes. The important thing is to move on, to explore, to develop, to push oneself to the farthest limits. It is better to make new mistakes than repeat old ones until the mind goes dull.

Risking is the backbone of effective reading. Each reading encounter is somewhat new Every time it is different; some new element has entered in. Good readers are risk-takers who wager their intuition and imagination. They stay lively and test their ideas and skills, rather than plod sure-footedly through a page of print. They know that it is up to them to breathe life into the author's words.

When the individual is willing to take risks, try out ideas and materials, and make discoveries, he has a good chance of succeeding at reading. Such attitudes and actions do not fit the rigid design of a behavioral objective approach, but they are at the heart of all learning.

Efficiency. One final guidepost draws our attention to efficiency. The behavioral objective approach is in keeping with the conventional definition of efficiency. It is aimed at making the teaching of reading easy. It makes only necessary demands on the teacher and children. On the other hand, teaching that starts with the individual child, if anything, complicates the teaching-learning process. It does not put down a smooth pathway to tread, but involves groping, uncertainty, and speculation.

What is efficient in the teaching of reading might be other than it appears at first glance. That is to say, the role destined for reading may make the harder way more appropriate. In fact, facilitating the attainment of an end may jeopardize the value and durability of the result.

The true test of efficiency rests in whether or not the approach used achieves lasting results. In this light, the long way might in the end prove to be the shortest.

Saying "Yes" to Life

Childhood is attracted to newness. The vision of childhood is fresh. Children have a healthy curiosity about life. They wonder about the world and naturally strive to find out why things tick. Their minds are "huh-able" and questioning. They seek involvement. Children have no trouble stopping what they are doing to turn abruptly to something else. Adults write plans in blue books. The blue books are then carried about and consulted as though Holy Writ. But the young quickly immerse themselves in the next thing when the wind shifts or a friend goes by. They look and hope for the unexpected.

Let us peel away our layers of adulthood and respond to the child's natural curiosity about the world. By teaching in ways that open the door to celebrating the significance of the child's life and achievement, we affirm the goodness of life. We dignify the worth of the individual.